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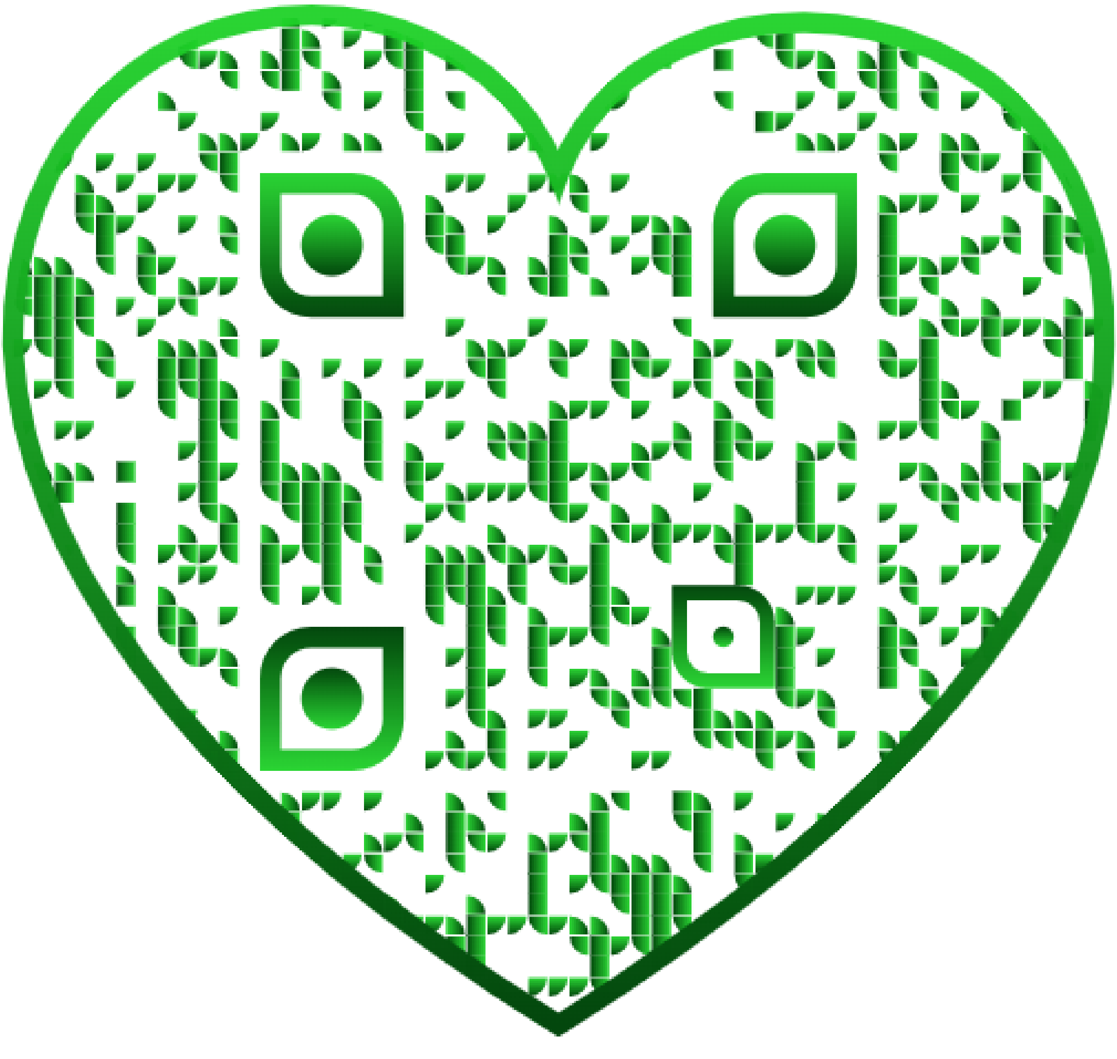

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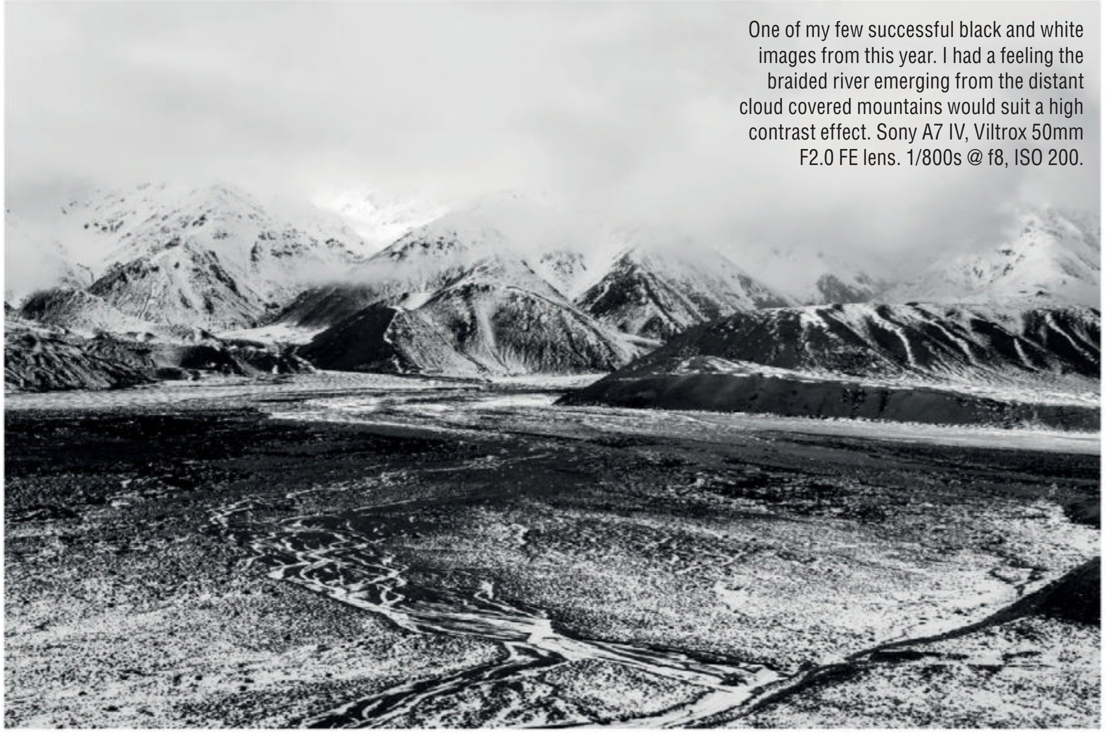

One of my few successful black and white images from this year. I had a feeling the braided river emerging from the distant cloud covered mountains would suit a high contrast effect. Sony A7 IV, Viltrox 50mm F2.0 FE lens. 1/800s @ f8, ISO 200.

IMAGE: MIKE O'CONNOR

THE MAGIC OF BLACK AND WHITE

MIKE O'CONNOR, EDITOR

There's something about black and white photography that never loses its magic. It takes us back to another era, but it never feels old. In fact, it gives certain images a quality that colour just can't match. I think that's why it has stayed so relevant, even as trends in photography have come and gone.

It's a cliché now perhaps, but shooting in black and white forces you to slow down and see differently. Without colour to lean on, it all comes down to light, shadow, texture and form. You can't rely on a splash of colour or a fiery sunset to do the heavy lifting. If you've ever set your camera to monochrome and walked around for a while looking through the viewfinder, you'll know how much it changes the way you shoot.

Of course, like all things in photography, doing it well is never as simple as throwing on a preset and hoping for the best. Some photos just don't translate, and the best black and white images come together when all the elements are working in harmony. I know in my own photography I might only shoot one strong candidate for black and white treatment in every 50 or 100 images. But that's what makes it so rewarding.

The Mono Awards are a celebration of this challenge. Now in their eighth year, they are more popular than ever, open to a global audience and continuing to attract some of the finest talent in the region. This shows that black and white photography is just as important to you as it is to us.

This year's winners show why the awards are thriving. Just look at how our People category winners each bring their own approach to black and white treatments while sharing a sense of nostalgia, or how our Animals category winners have turned their attention to the details that make their subjects so distinctive. This is image-making with purpose.

As you flip through the pages ahead, you'll see much more than a set of winners. These images are a reminder that even after nearly a decade of running The Mono Awards, black and white still has the power to stop us in our tracks and make a connection that feels simple, honest and lasting. ✪

Mike

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IMAGE: CARL NEHORE

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Every year, the People category of The Mono Awards challenges photographers to show us something unique about the human experience, with one simple rule – it has to be in black and white. This year brought an amazing mix of styles and stories, and here are the top 40 shots that stood out.

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Capturing the diversity of the animal world in a single black and white frame is no easy task, making this one of the toughest genres to master. These were our picks for 2025.

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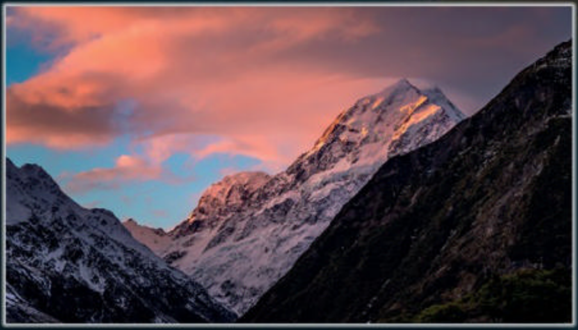
THIS ISSUE’S COVER

Captured by Belgian photographer George Dian Balan, his image *When mammoths ruled the earth* is the winner of the Animals category in The Mono Awards 2025. You can read more about the image on page 40.

NEW ZEALAND PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS



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Lessons in Light — Central Otago
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The Untouched Frontier — Maniototo
Discover rugged mountain backdrops, serene alpine lakes, and weathered heritage sites off the beaten path. Witness Poolburn valley ignited in molten gold at sunset, then frame the surreal turquoise waters of St Bathans.

Reflections, Peaks & Alpine Drama — Wanaka
Rise early to chase mirror-calm lake reflections, compose dramatic mountain vistas, and immortalise the iconic lone tree glowing in magical light. From dawn pastels to bold daylight contrasts, craft images capturing every mood and texture of this alpine paradise.

The Crown Jewel — Aoraki/Mount Cook
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QUICK SNAPS

NIKKOR Z 24-70MM F/2.8 S II ANNOUNCED

NIKON has just announced their new top of the line, 'do everything lens' – the NIKKOR Z 24-70mm f/2.8 S II. Nikon is touting it as a 'new-generation f/2.8 standard zoom lens'.

The new version of the general purpose workhorse introduces an internal zoom mechanism, which Nikon says helps improve handling and reduces the chance of dust and moisture entering the lens.

At approximately 675g, it is also lighter than comparable lenses in its category, and 130g lighter than the NIKKOR Z 24-70mm f/2.8 S.

Focusing speed is reportedly now around five times faster, with tracking performance during zooming improved by about 60%.

While the lens's faster autofocus and lighter weight will be a welcome advantage for wedding and event photographers, its launch price of $4,599 is higher than comparable standard zooms from other brands, which generally range from $2,800 to $3,300. The original NIKKOR Z 24-70mm f/2.8 S currently retails for around $3,499.

You can find out more at Nikon.com.au.

DJI LAUNCHES OSMO 360, ITS FIRST 360-DEGREE CAMERA

DJI has officially launched the Osmo 360, marking its first entry into the 360-degree camera market.

The new camera offers high-resolution video, stabilisation, and dual-lens versatility, and with its release, DJI has entered a competitive segment of the camera market traditionally led by companies like Insta360 and GoPro.

The camera is capable of recording 8K video at 30 frames per second and capturing 120-megapixel still images. It has a pixel size of 2.4 microns and a wide f/1.9 aperture.

While the Osmo 360 is built for immersive 360-degree capture, it can also be used as a standard action camera. In single-lens mode, it records up to 5K at 60 frames per second or 4K at 120 frames per second. A "Boost" mode allows for a 170-degree field of view.

As you might expect, the camera supports DJI's accessory system, including microphones, mounts, and extension rods.

You can find out more at store.dji.com/au.

AI-GENERATED MODELS APPEAR IN 'VOGUE' MAGAZINE

FOR the first time, an AI-generated model has appeared in the pages of *Vogue* magazine, prompting criticism over unrealistic beauty ideals and concerns about the technology's impact on creative industries.

The August print edition of the iconic publication features a Guess advertisement showcasing a flawless blonde model promoting the brand's summer collection.

The advertising campaign was created by Seraphinne Vallora, which describes itself as a design-led AI marketing agency founded by Valentina Gonzalez and Andreea Petrescu.

Speaking to the BBC, the duo said Guess co-founder Paul Marciano contacted them via Instagram with a request to create AI models for the brand's campaign.

Once the campaign launched, the agency faced widespread criticism.

"We understand people may think AI will replace jobs, but in reality, it's just another tool in the design industry. It creates jobs – these images are AI-driven but made by humans, creatives, and designers," the company stated.

Online criticism has also centred on a lack of diversity in the company's AI models, which appear to reinforce narrow beauty ideals.

SONY ANNOUNCES 61-MEGAPIXEL RX1R III

AFTER a nearly ten-year wait, Sony has announced the RX1R III, built around a 61-megapixel image sensor and a Zeiss Sonnar T* 35mm f/2 lens.

Despite rising demand for premium compact cameras such as Fujifilm's X100VI and the Leica Q series, Sony has taken its time with the successor to the RX1R II.

That camera featured a 42.4-megapixel Exmor R CMOS image sensor and a 35mm f/2 lens, but a fairly primitive autofocus system, at least by recent standards.

At the time, it was also a fairly niche (and pricey) camera, potentially condemning it to history.

But, surprisingly perhaps, in the intervening years demand for compact cameras of its type have soared.

The new RX1R III promises significant improvements compared to the RX1R II, including Sony's newest Bionz XR image processing engine, a dedicated AI processing unit to drive improved autofocus, and the a7R V's impressive autofocus performance.

Along with the internals, the camera's body has also been redesigned, and now positions the viewfinder on the top shoulder of the camera, rather than the pop-up unit used by the previous version. Surprisingly, the rear screen is now fixed, rather than tilting. ✪

The RX1R III is out now for approximately $7,999 AUD.

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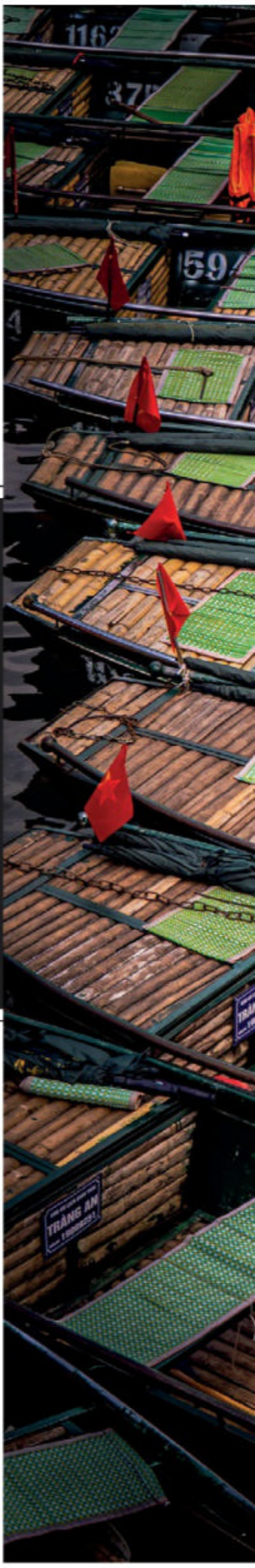
YOUR BEST SHOT

TRAVEL

Travel photography allows us to create a visual record of journeys near and far. This month, you wowed us with a massive variety of imagery that not only showcased amazing locations around the world, but the unique characters who inhabit them. These were our picks from a bumper lineup of stellar shots.



DANIEN BEETS

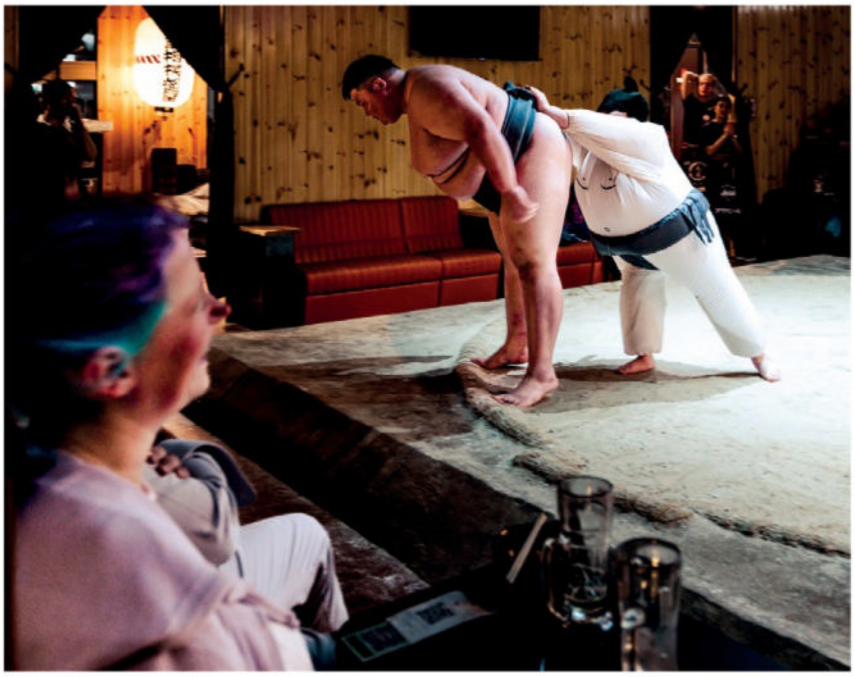
Flotilla

EDITOR'S COMMENT
Repetition can be a powerful technique in photography, and Danien Beets has used it to great effect in his winning shot *Flotilla*, taken in Vietnam earlier this year. What stands out is not only the repeating lines of boats, but also the oars, lifejackets, the flags, the seats, and the hats worn by the boat people — all fantastic details that draw the viewer in and invite closer exploration.

TECHNICAL DETAILS
OM System OM-5, 14-150mm lens @ 36mm. 1/500s @ f9, ISO 200.

Thanks to the team at Blonde Robot, Danien Beets has won a Think Tank DarkLight Backpack in 20L size. Also available in 14L, the DarkLight is the ideal blend of tactical style and everyday functionality. Whether you're an enthusiast capturing cityscapes or an advanced amateur exploring the great outdoors, it offers a durable and comfortable solution to carry your gear. Built with a laser-cut MOLLE panel and tactical webbing rails, this rucksack allows you to precisely configure your loadout.

SEE MORE AT THINKTANKPHOTO.COM



ALAN BRANCH

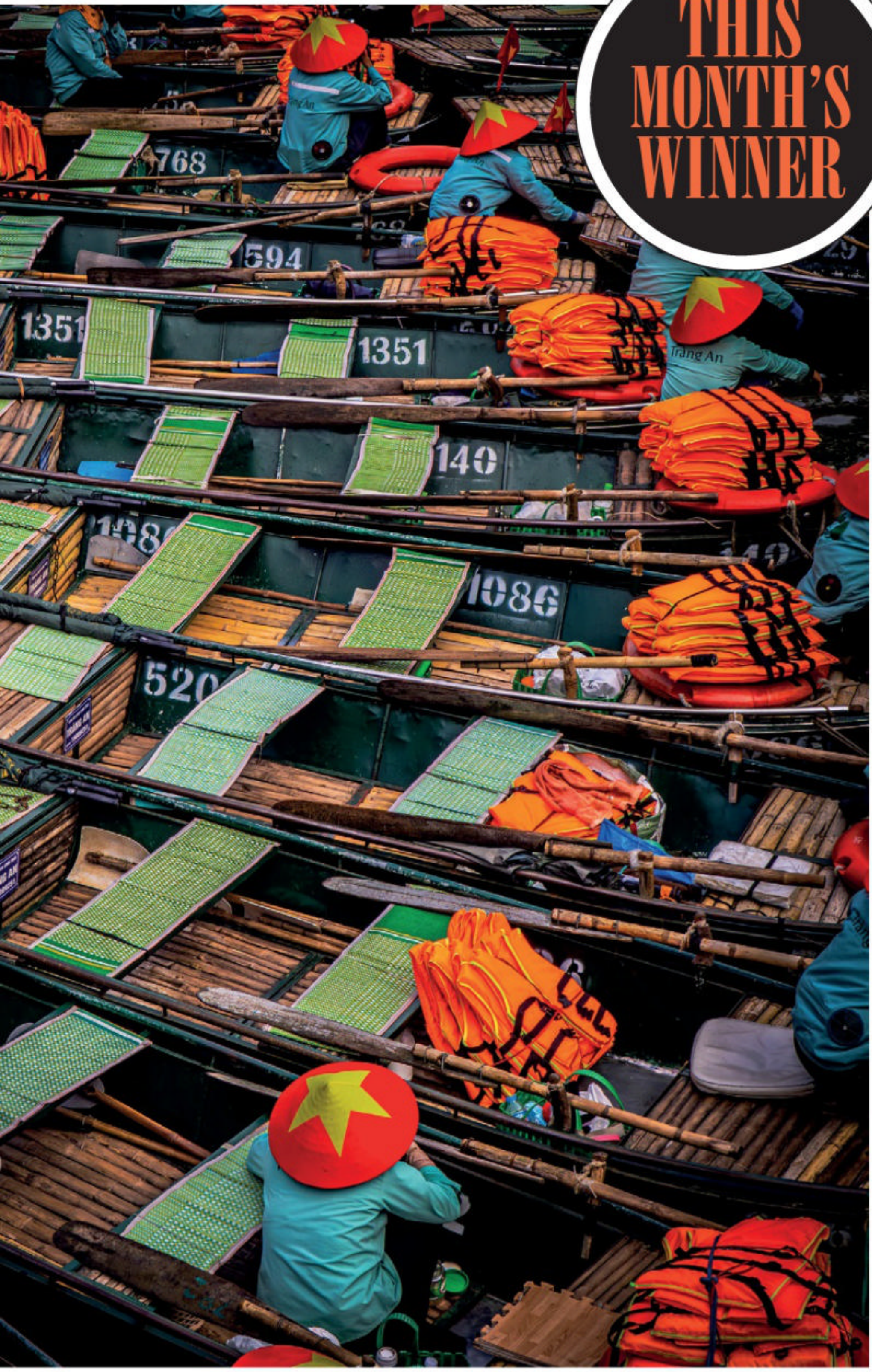
Sumo Push

EDITOR'S COMMENT
A strong photograph does more than record what is in front of the lens. It looks for details that add depth and meaning, and Alan Branch has achieved this with real skill in this image.

At first glance the focus is on the David vs Goliath struggle between two sumo wrestlers. Look a little closer, however, and the laughing spectator in the foreground becomes just as important. Their presence shifts the tone, so we don't just see the fight, but also spectacle and humour. Even out of focus, the spectator's reaction enriches the scene and brings a great sense of fun.

TECHNICAL DETAILS
Olympus E-M5 MK II, Olympus 75-300mm lens @ 300mm. 1/160s @ f6.7, ISO 1250.

THIS MONTH'S WINNER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Full-Frame Prime Lens
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Excellent Image Quality
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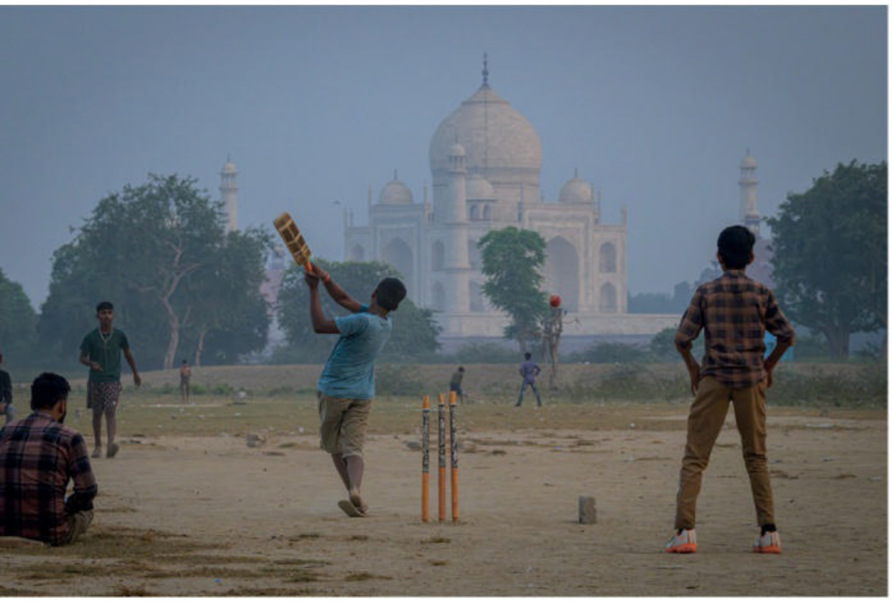
F2.0 Large Aperture
Rear Cap with
Firmware Update Port



RICHARD MISQUITTA

Icons of India

HOW I DID IT
India is well-known for the Taj Mahal and the popularity of the game of cricket. I was beside myself when I noticed that I could capture an image of both icons in the one frame. It seems surreal that there are locals who have the Taj Mahal in the background of their everyday lives.

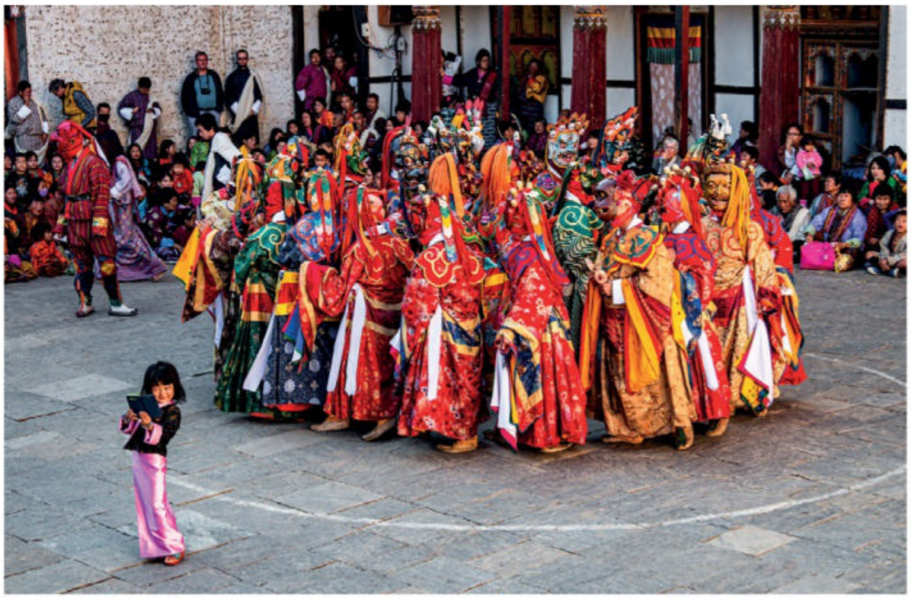
TECHNICAL DETAILS
Nikon Z9, Nikon 70-200mm f/2.8E lens (via Nikon FTZ adaptor) @ 122mm. 1/640s @ f11, ISO 2800.

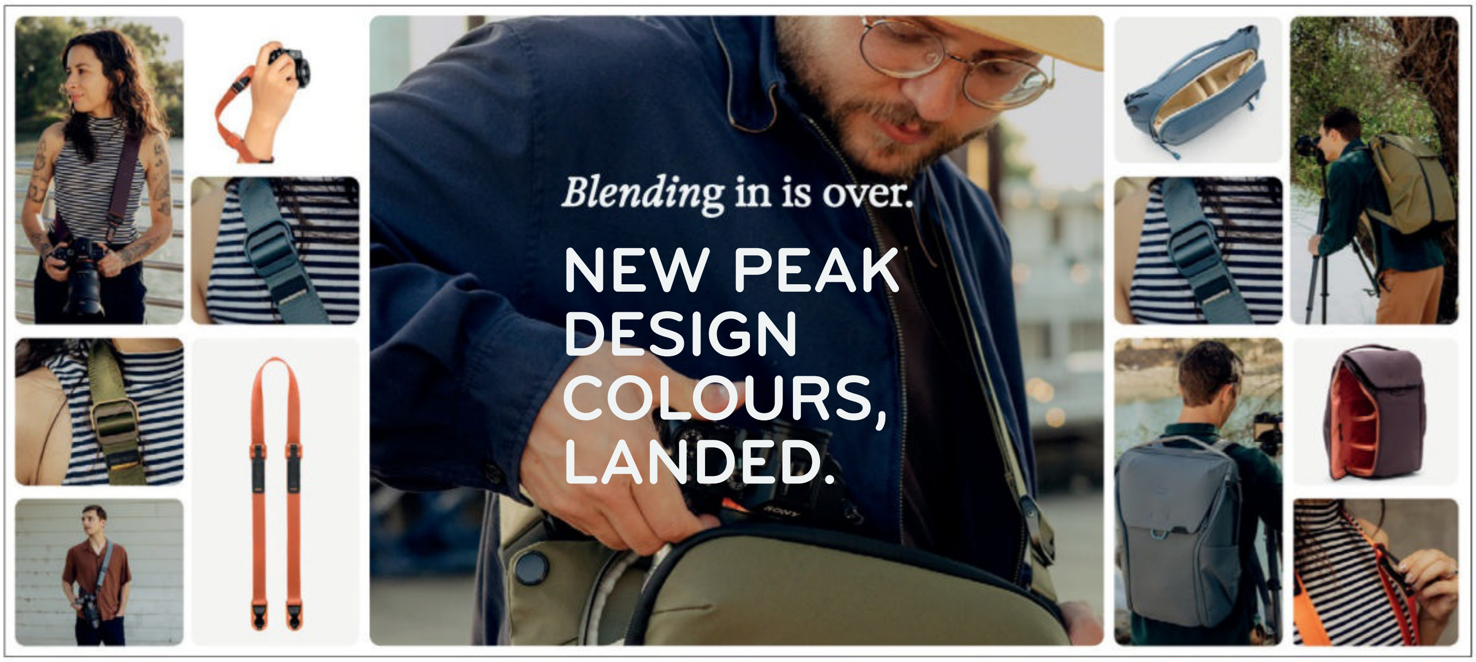
LYN ALVES

Modern meet Tradition

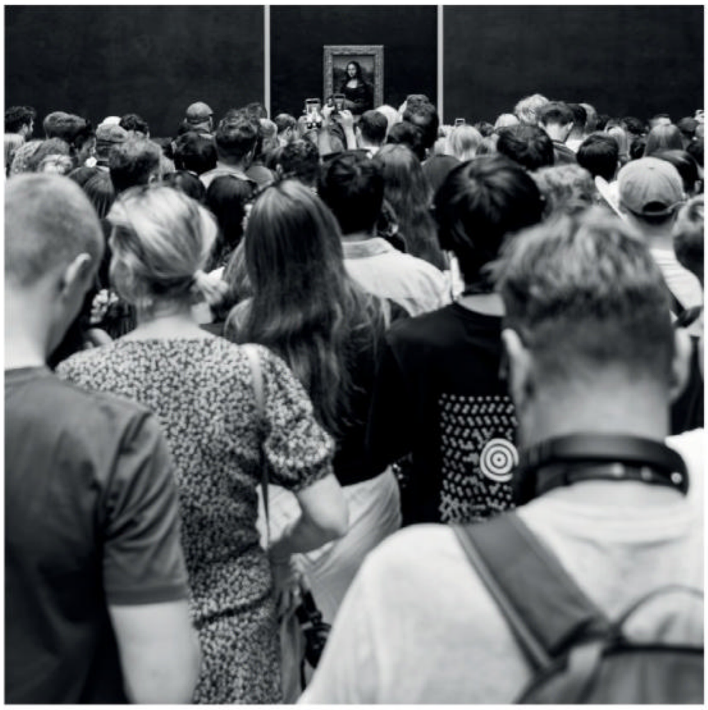
HOW I DID IT
After a 9-hour drive over rather rough roads I arrived at a small village called Trashigang in Eastern Bhutan. One of the many festivals that Bhutan is well known for was happening, and I was intrigued with the traditional musical instruments that were being played. I climbed up near the stage to check out the instruments and happened to look down and see this young Bhutanese girl step out and take a selfie. The result is one of those once-in-a-lifetime shots showing modern technology in a traditional environment.

TECHNICAL DETAILS
Canon 5D Mark IV, EF 17-85mm f4-5.6 IS USM lens @ 44mm. 1/160s @ f6.3, ISO 200.





Blending in is over.
NEW PEAK DESIGN COLOURS, LANDED.



MARK COGHILL

Bucket list – Mona Lisa

HOW I DID IT
The crush in front of the Mona Lisa at The Louvre, a bucket list item for many who visit Paris. Interestingly most of the museum was not like this with some galleries devoid of people.

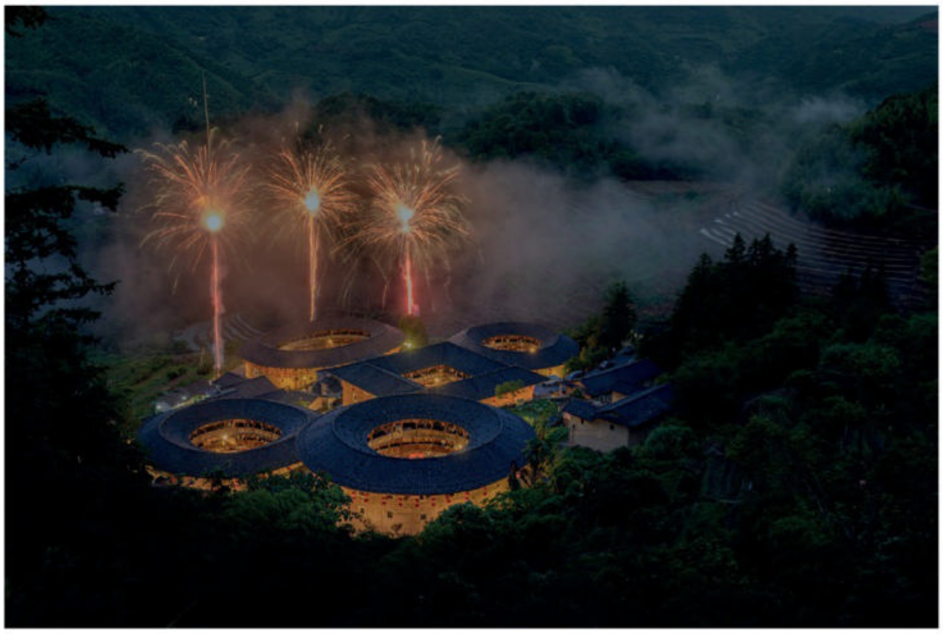
TECHNICAL DETAILS
Canon 5D IV, Tamron 24-70mm f2.8 Di VC lens @ 24mm. 1/250s @ f2.8, ISO 1600.

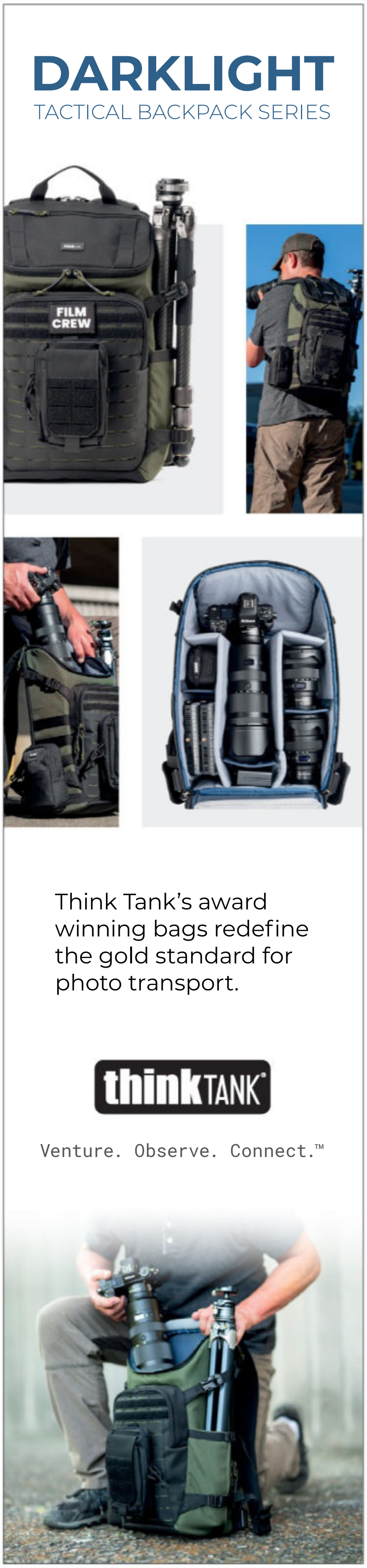
DONALD CHIN

Fireworks display at Tuloh

HOW I DID IT
I took this shot on a trip to the UNESCO site of Tuloh in China, south-west of Fujian province, inland from the Taiwan Strait.

TECHNICAL DETAILS
Sony A1 Mark II, FE28-70mm f2 lens @ 28mm. 2.5s @ f4.5, ISO 100.

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31 October 2025

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FOOD
6 December 2025

APRIL 2026
ABSTRACT
31 January 2026

JUNE 2026
BIG AND SMALL
31 March 2026

AUGUST 2026
SOFT LIGHT
31 May 2026

YOUR ENTRY

1. Email your entry to yourbestshot@australianphotography.com with the name of the competition theme in the email subject line, for example: Weather, Abstract, Landscape, etc.
2. The image file must be the same as your name, for example Jane Smith.jpg. If you enter multiple images, each new image file name should be appended with a unique number, eg Jane Smith2.jpg
3. A maximum of three images can be entered per person.
4. Images must be in JPEG format.
5. Email file size must not exceed 7MB.
6. Please include the following information about your entry in the body of your email: Name, image title and up to 200 words explaining how you created your image. Please also include technical details including camera, lens, focal length, shutter speed, aperture, ISO, tripod (if used) and a brief summary of any software edits.

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THE Mono AWARDS 2025

With more than 3,500 entries submitted from all corners of the globe, we are proud to present the winners of The Mono Awards 2025, presented by Synology.

Now in its seventh year, the competition continues to highlight some of the finest talent in black and white photography worldwide.

This year's honours went to three outstanding works: a timeless portrait by New Zealand's Amy Hughes, a dramatic storm scene captured by NSW's Will Eades, and a striking interpretation of a majestic elephant by Belgium's George Dian Balan. Together, they led a field of photographers competing for $16,000 in cash and prizes across the three categories of People, Places and Animals.

Across the following pages, you'll find the winners, runners-up and Top 40 images in each category, accompanied by commentary from the judges on what made the standout photographs rise above the rest.

Our sincere thanks go to the judging panel of Anthony McKee, Liz Ham, Paul Blackmore, Alex Frayne, Alex Cearns OAM, Chris Budgeon, Meg Hewitt, Jay Collier, Matt Palmer, Helen Whittle, Mike Langford and Jackie Ranken for the enormous task of selecting this year's winners.

We are also grateful to Synology for their generous support and, of course, to every photographer who entered this year. Thank you to all of you for helping shape this year's awards – you have made The Mono Awards a true celebration of the artistry and diversity of Black and White. We hope you enjoy exploring the 120 finalist images as much as we have.

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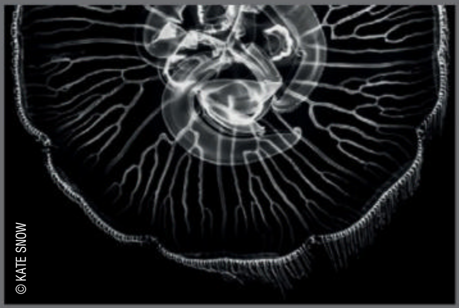

© KATE SNOW

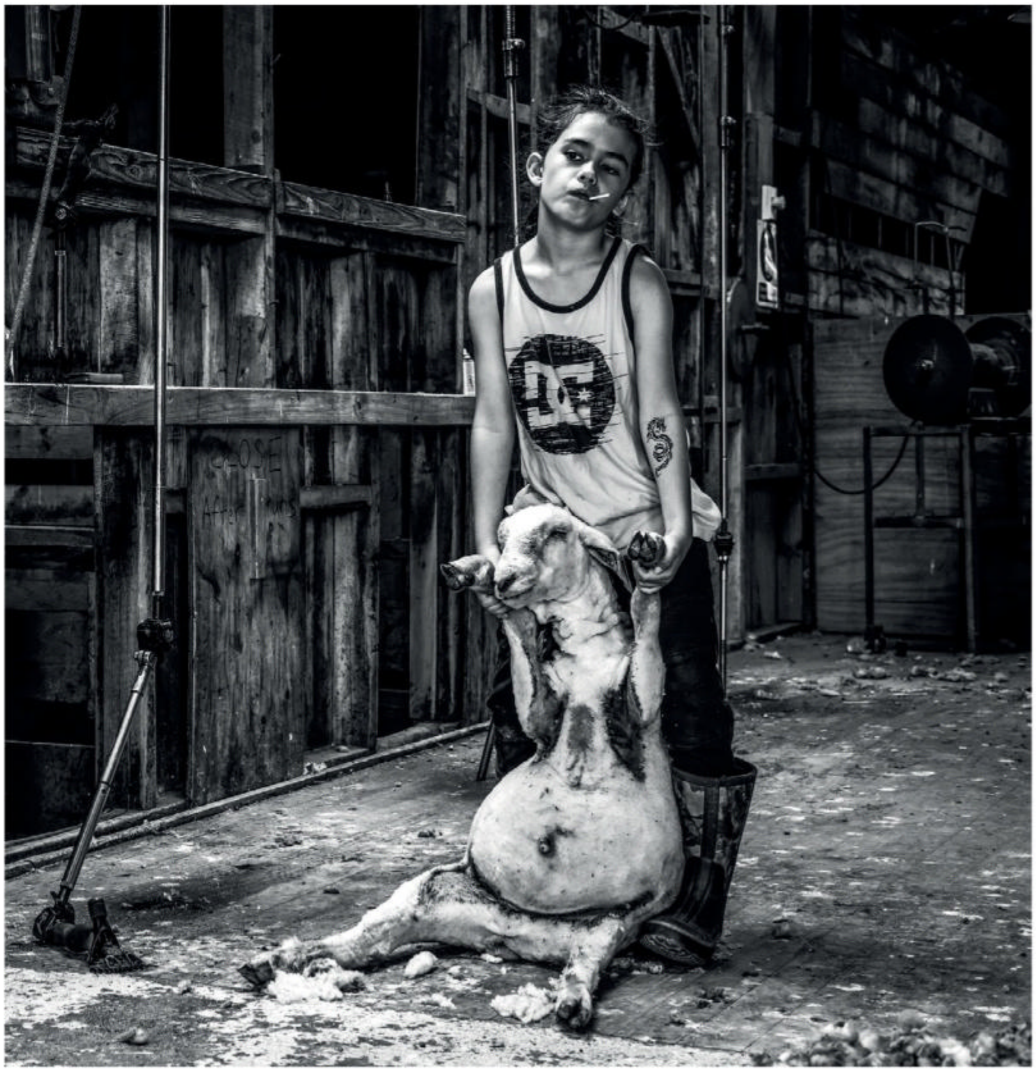
WINNER
AMY HUGHES

Based in Ranfurly, in the heart of the Maniototo in Central Otago, New Zealand, Amy Hughes specialises in landscape photography, and describes herself as having a deep passion for the region's sweeping hills, endless skies, and the textured remains of forgotten farmsteads.

"My work captures the beauty of rural life both in its vastness and its quiet, intimate moments," she says.

"I'm also drawn to the strength, resilience, and untold stories of the people and animals that shape my rural community."

facebook.com/www.amyhughes.photography/



IN THE SHEARING SHEDS. Amy Hughes' People category winning image In the shearing sheds depicts her eight-year old son Kahu.

For Hughes, the image tells a layered, authentic story.

"The image speaks to rural life, generational roles, and the connection between humans and animals," she says.

"His expression is indifferent, maybe even defiant, suggesting resilience and a familiarity with hard work. I feel the composition, lighting, and mood all work together to evoke emotion and spark curiosity."

For our judges, Kahu's characterful pose, sense of humour, and the rough, authentic setting combined to create an award-winning shot.

***Prize**: $3,000, **Synology DS923+ 4-bay NAS with two 4tb hard drives valued at** $1,499.*

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

The scene is set, the lighting is superb, and now it's up to us – the viewers – to interpret the story as we choose. I see this as a timeless photograph featuring two strikingly different characters. It's the contrast between the old ewe with her bulging belly and the young shearing hand, with his tattoo and stick-in-mouth attitude, that takes centre stage. Nothing is out of place, and the scene feels authentic as a result. This is an image with a high level of craft and storytelling skill. **Jackie Ranken**

This is a truly original documentary style photograph that has a raw honesty about it. I love that it takes you to a place that makes you smile. To me, the grungy black and white interpretation has made this feel real. **Mike Langford**

RUNNER-UP EM HACON

Based on a cattle station in North West Queensland, photographer and mother of three Em Hacon describes herself as blessed to live a life that brings her great joy.

"I get to be wife to a wonderful husband, mum to three happy healthy cheeky wildlings, live on land I am besotted with, and look after animals that I am enthralled with," she says.

Photography is also a powerful creative outlet.

"I feel blessed that my camera provides an outlet for my creative brain and heart," she says.

"Life can be so full and hectic and days can just be consumed before they've even started, so these moments where I have my camera in hand, where I pause, slow down and compose my moment, give me a chance to soak life in."

@cow.girl.mumma

MUM SAID DON'T BREAK THE CLOTHESLINE. *Em Hacon's People category runner-up winning image depicts her kids climbing on the family's Hills Hoist clothesline, which just so happens to be the same Hills Hoist she climbed on as a child.*

"Mum was driven round the bend by my siblings and I climbing on it," she recalls. "Now I feel her pain!"

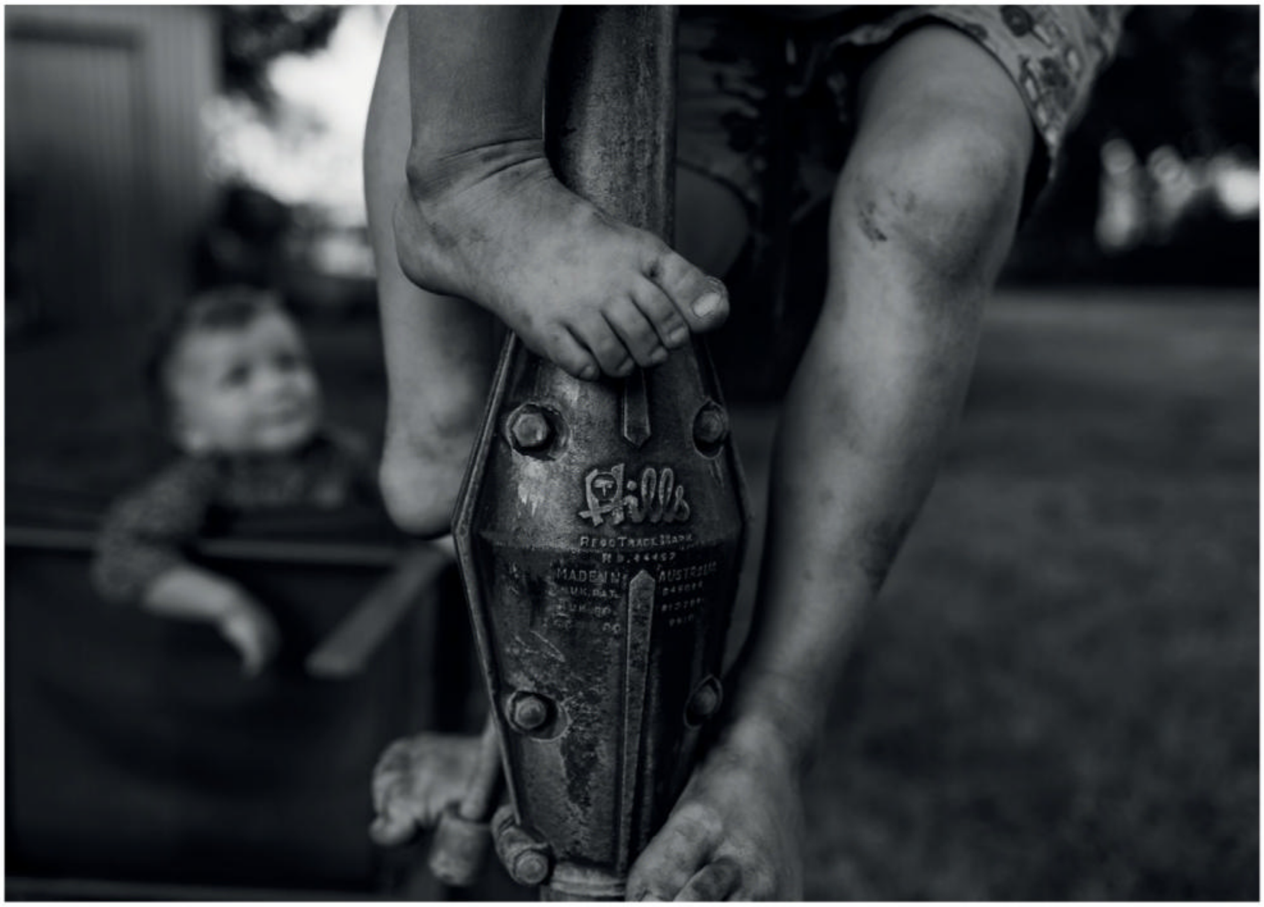
For our judges, this iconic piece of Australiana is elevated from mere nostalgia to fine art, and further elevated by Hacon's beautiful editing.

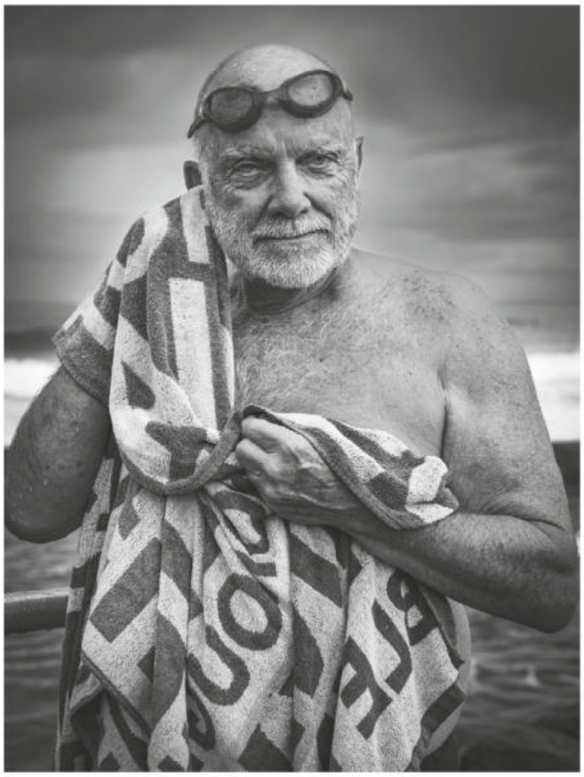
***Prize*: $1,000 cash.**

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

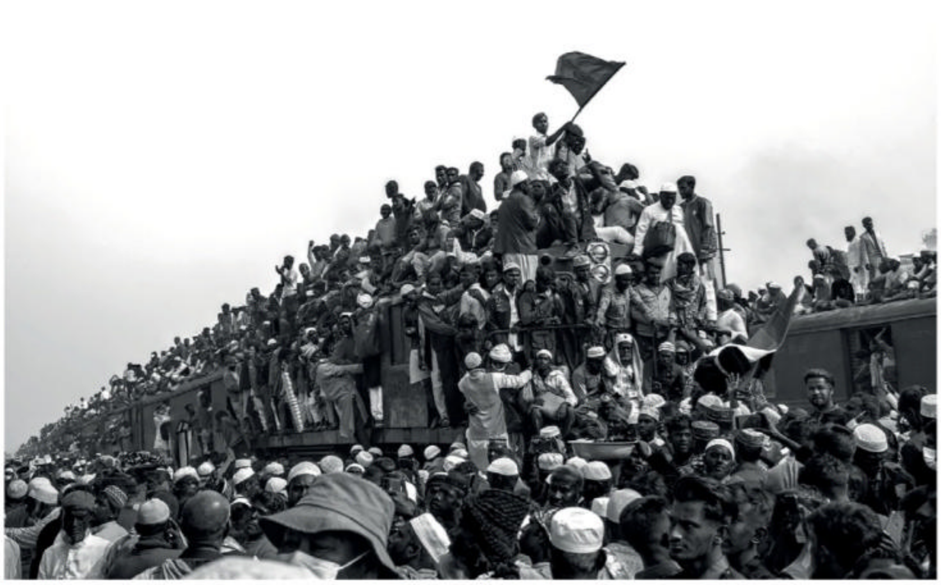
There were a lot of great images in the People section, but it was Em Hacon's photo of young children playing on an old Hills Hoist clothesline that really captured the attention of our judges. Dirty young feet clambering over an Australian backyard icon possibly stirred a few old memories in some of our judges, but it was also the beautiful treatment of this image that won the day. We see two pair of feet on the old gear box (complete with the Hills logo), and in the background, blurred, we see a younger brother just waiting his turn when he can clamber onto the clothesline too. This photo really is the stuff of memories. **Anthony McKee**

An outstanding image! From the choice to focus on the children's feet in the foreground rather than focusing on the child's face behind (which invites your eye to search around the image to reveal the story), to the shallow depth of field with sharp focus on the iconic Hills Hoist logo; this image takes me back to my childhood and invokes a sense of nostalgia of climbing the clothesline in my backyard. The result is something unmistakably Australian. **Jay Collier**

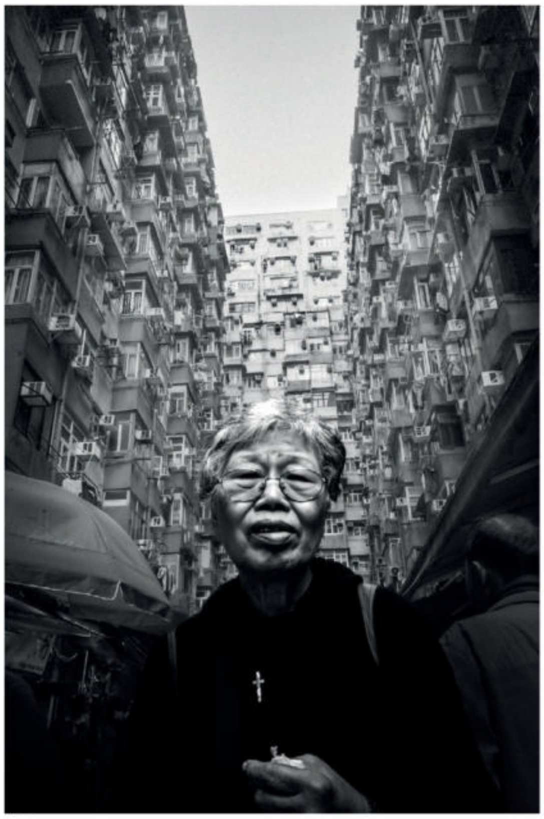




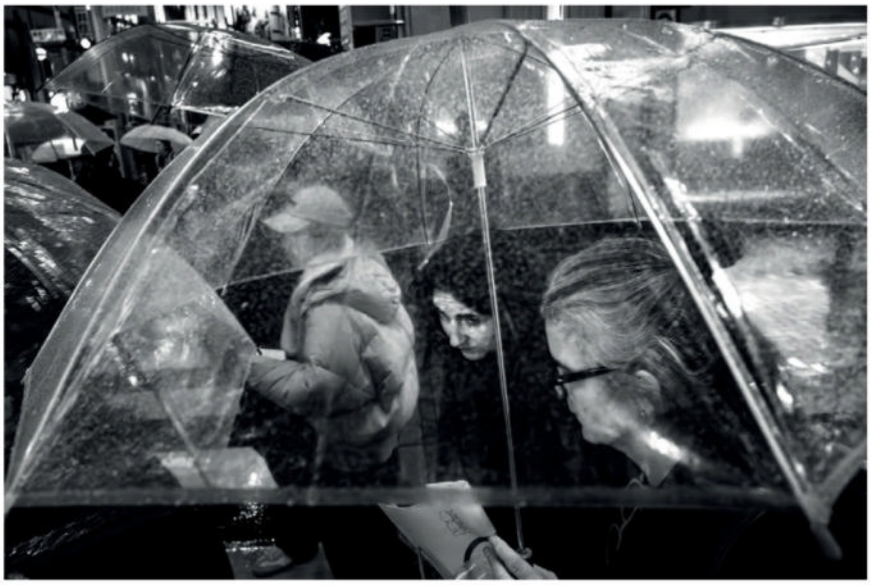
3 **ROB CLEARY** BOB



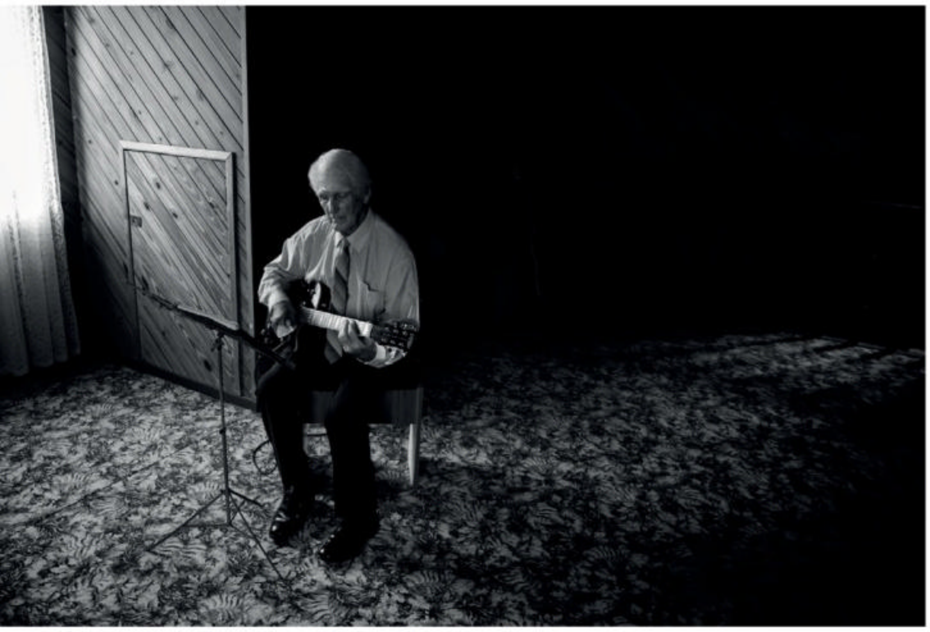
4 **MUHAMMAD AMDAD HOSSAIN** OVERCROWDED TRAIN



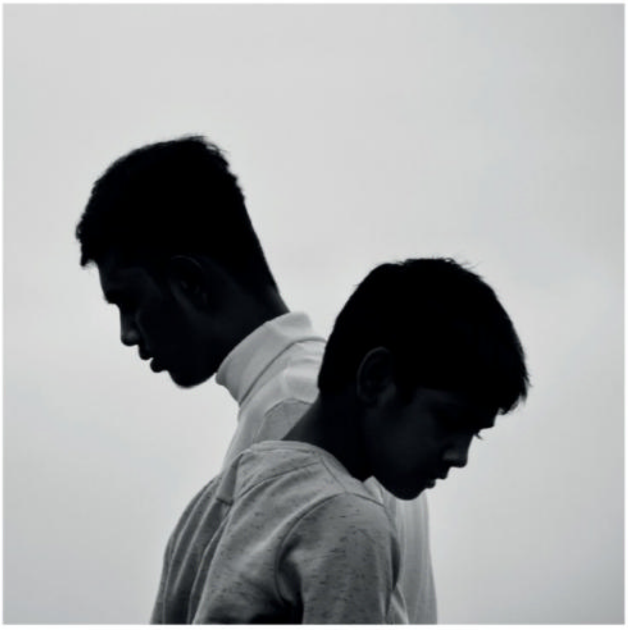
7 **DAVID NIU** CITY OF FACES



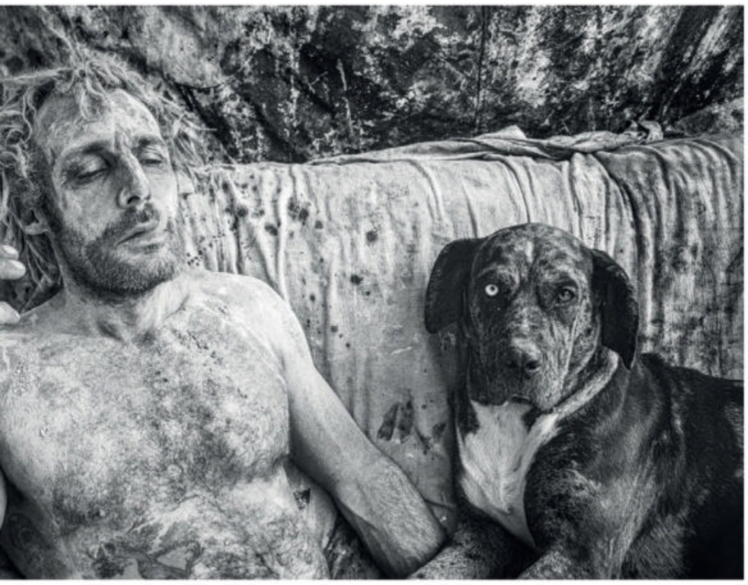
8 **ROB SENIOR** RAINY NIGHT IN TOKYO



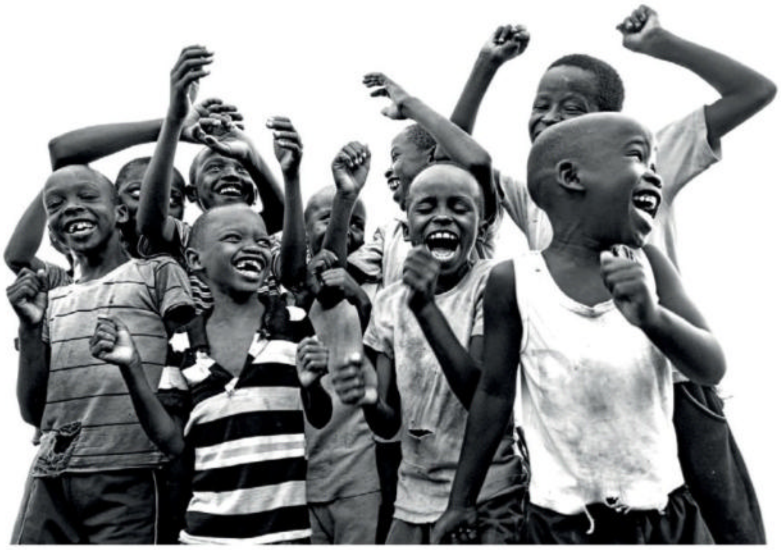
❺ **JI YO LEE** A TIMELESS MOMENT: FROM PAST SHADOWS TO FUTURE LIGHT



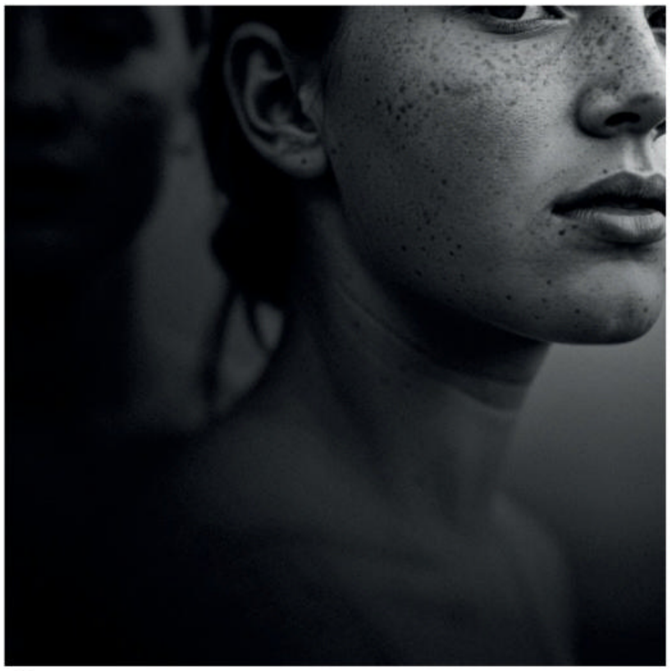
❻ **JOHANNES REINHART** BROTHERS



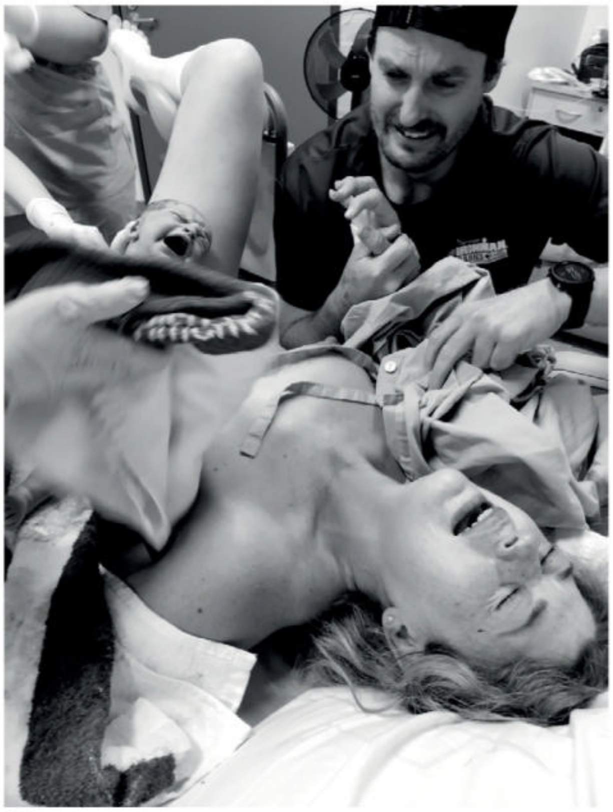
❾ **SCURVY MIKULA-KOENITZ** BARE BONES (FRAGMENTS)



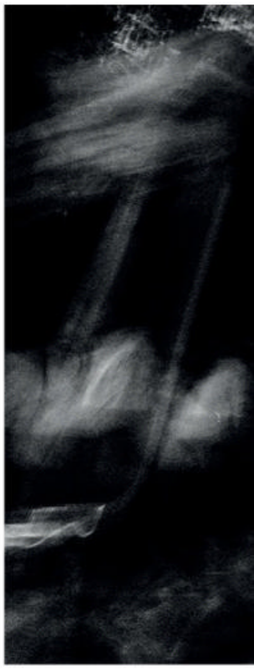
❿ **KRISTYN TAYLOR** GIGGLING BOYS OF BARINGO

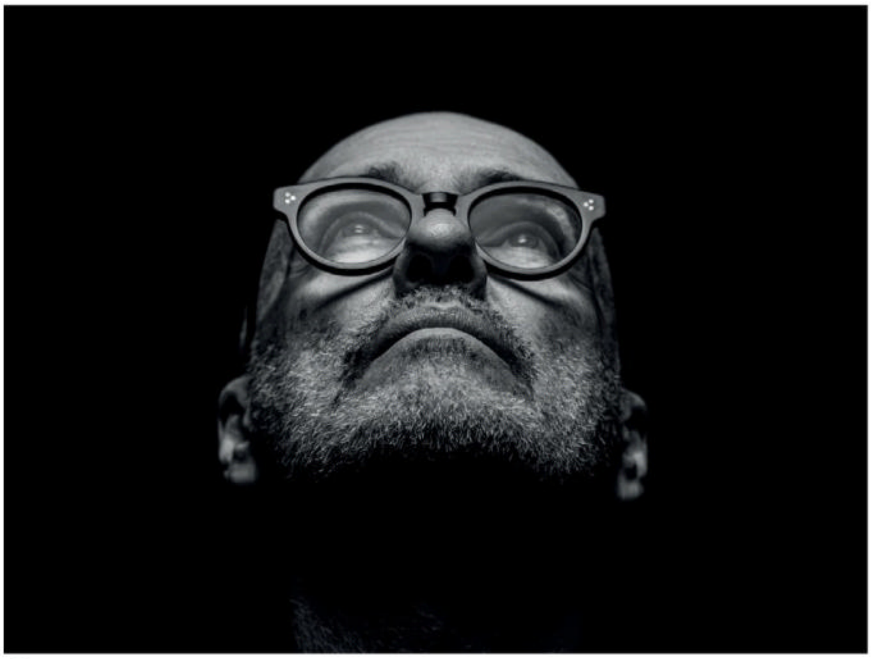


⑪ **ROBERTO CORINALDESI** MISSUP

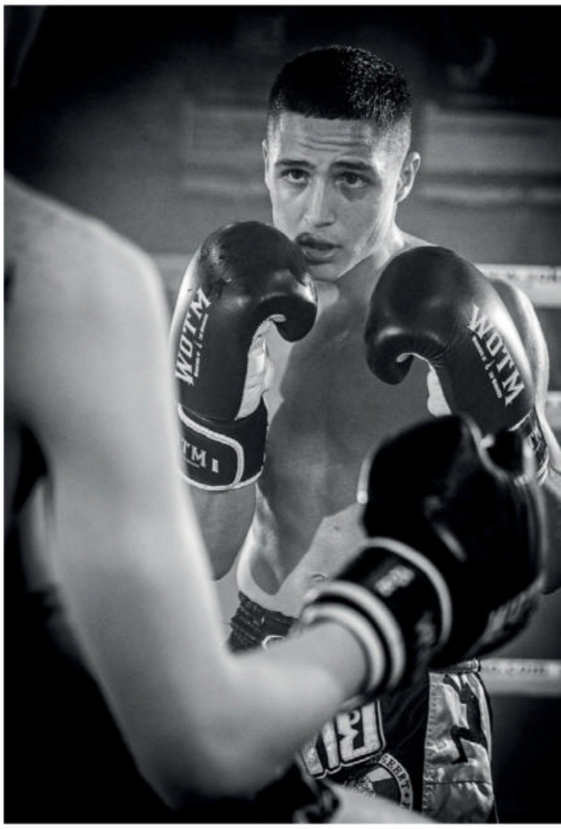


⑫ **MONIQUE MACH** LIFE

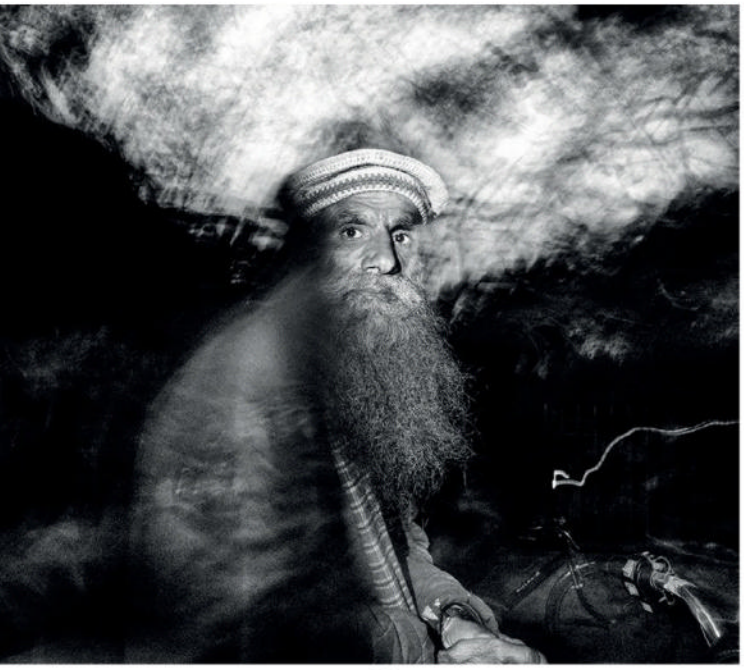




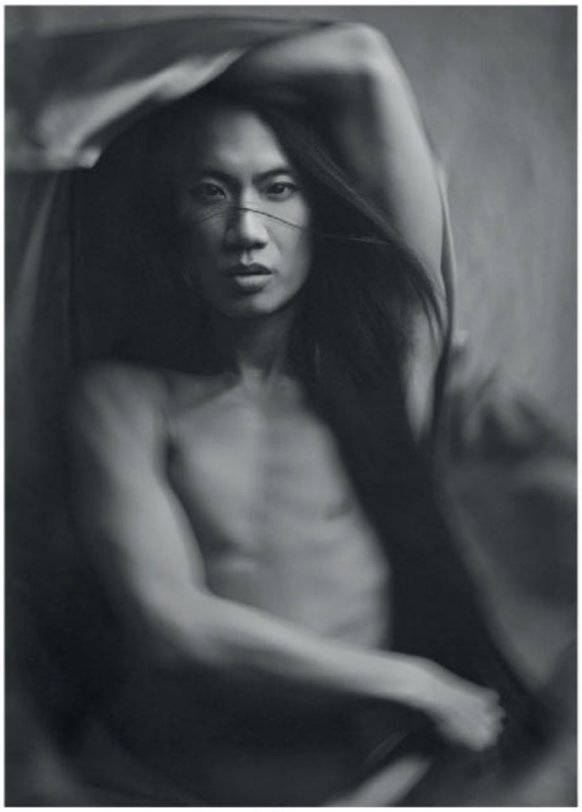
⑮ **STEFAN GUGGENBICHLER** ME



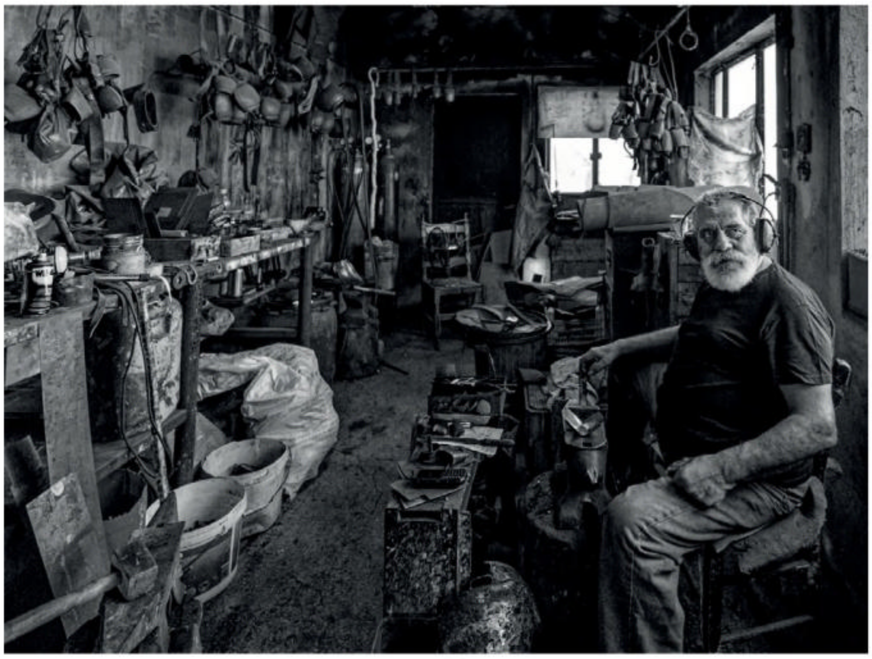
⑯ **NANCY LIAO** THE FIGHTER



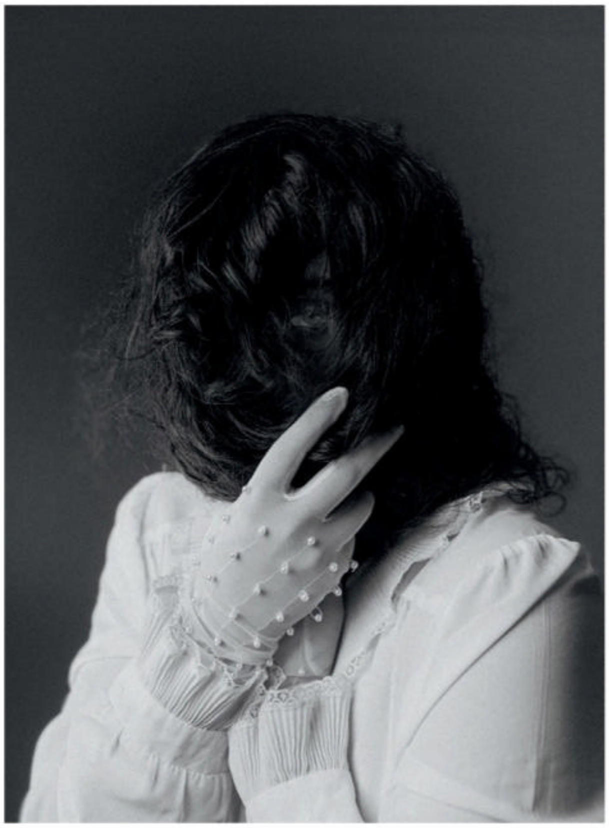
⑬ **GAVIN LIBOTTE** JAMA MASJID



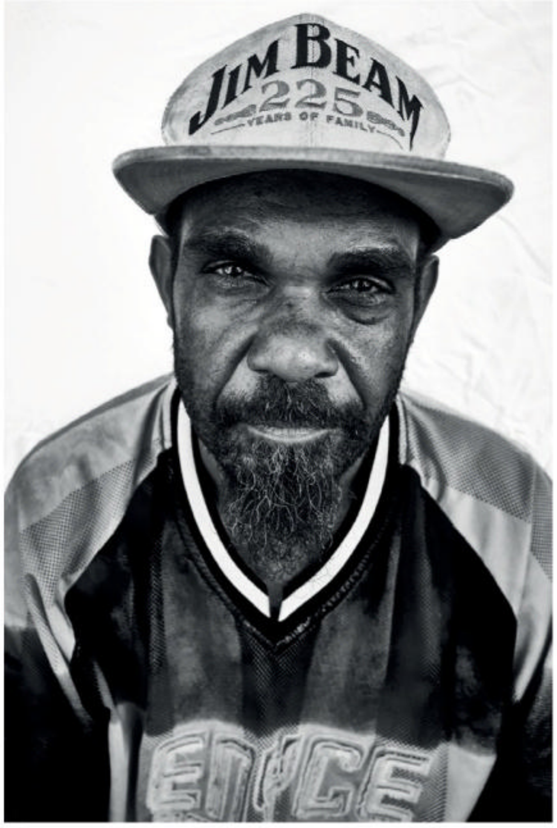
⑭ **HEIDI MARGOCSY** AMIDST



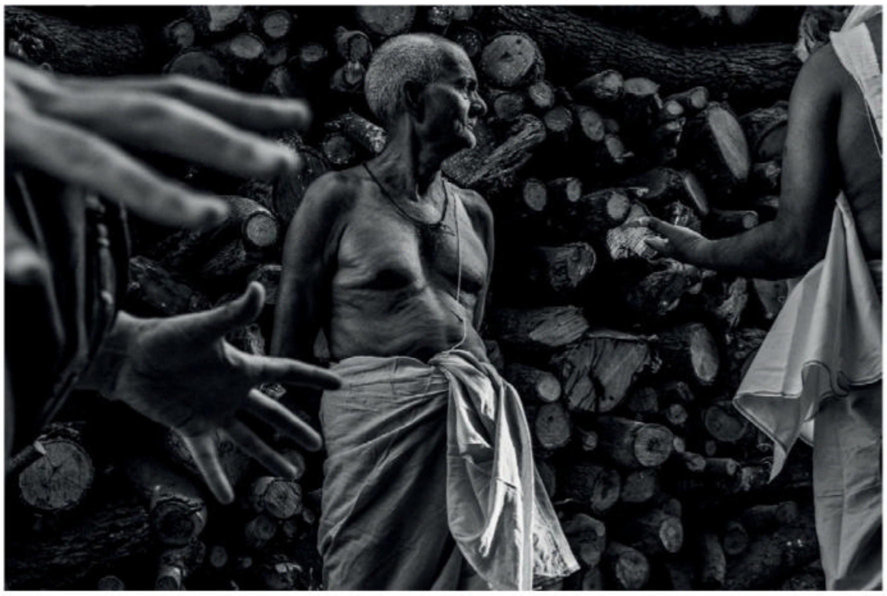
⑰ **NILMINI DE SILVA** THE BELL MAKER



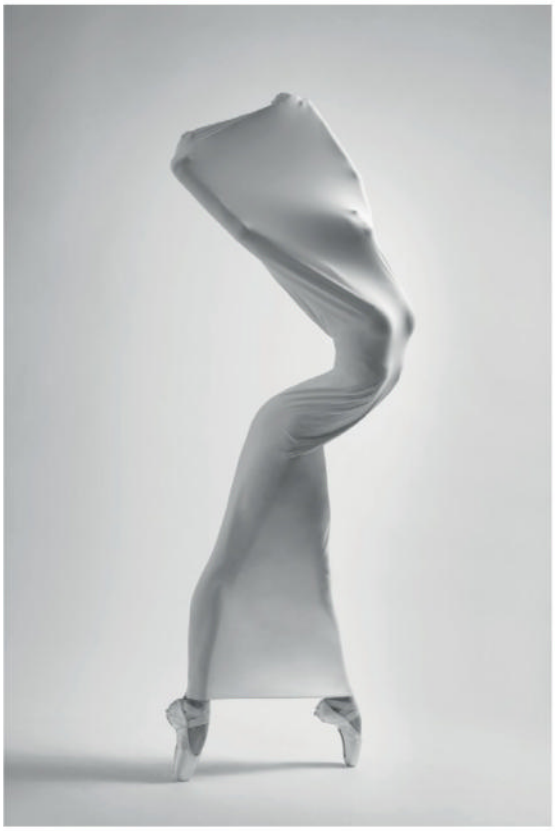
⑱ **BYRON COLL** ELLA III


JIM BEAM
225
YEARS OF FAMILY

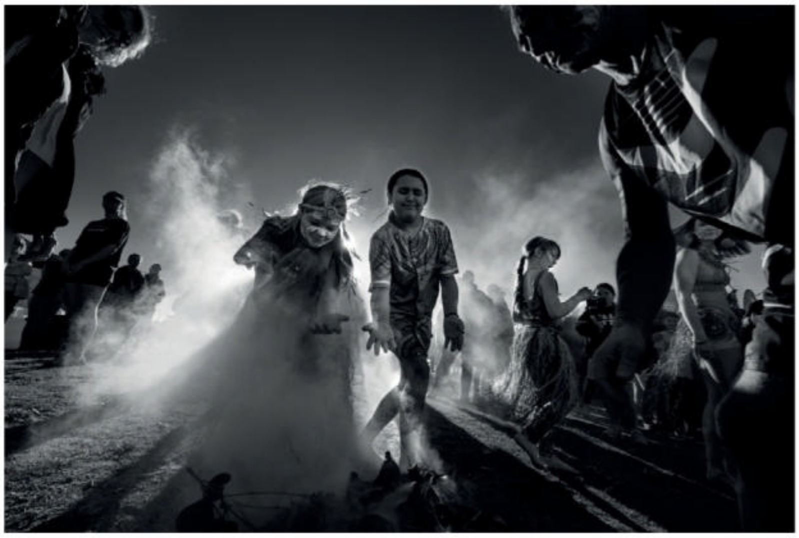
19 **MARK GRIFFIN** MARLON



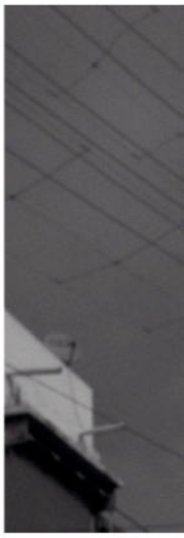
20 **SEBASTIAN GIUNTA** WOOD KEEPER

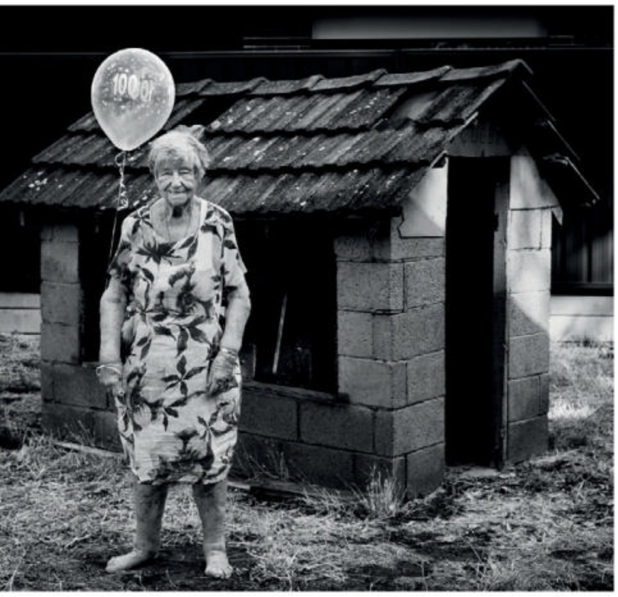


23 **CLINTON BRADBURY** STEPPING OUT

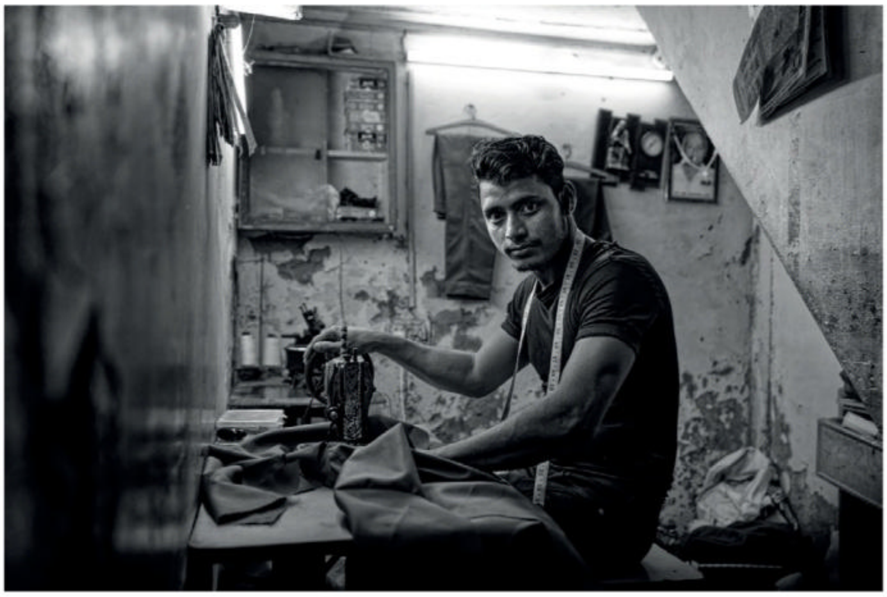


24 **DARREN ANDERSON** CULTURAL CLEANSE

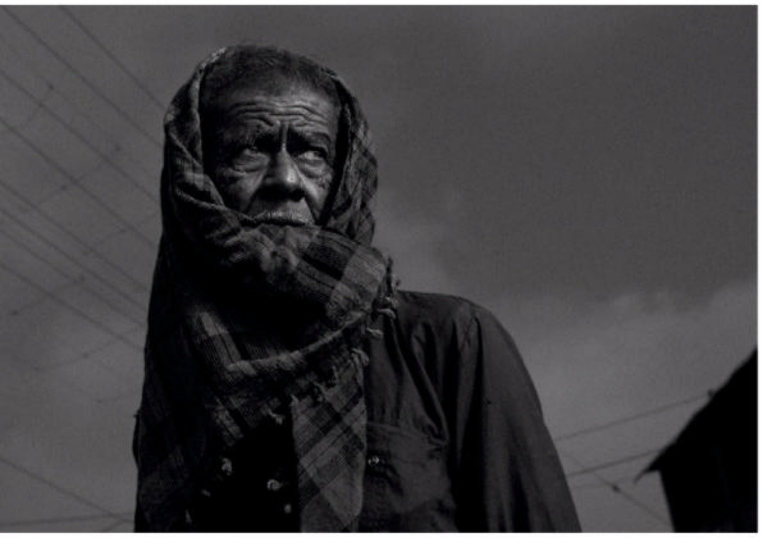




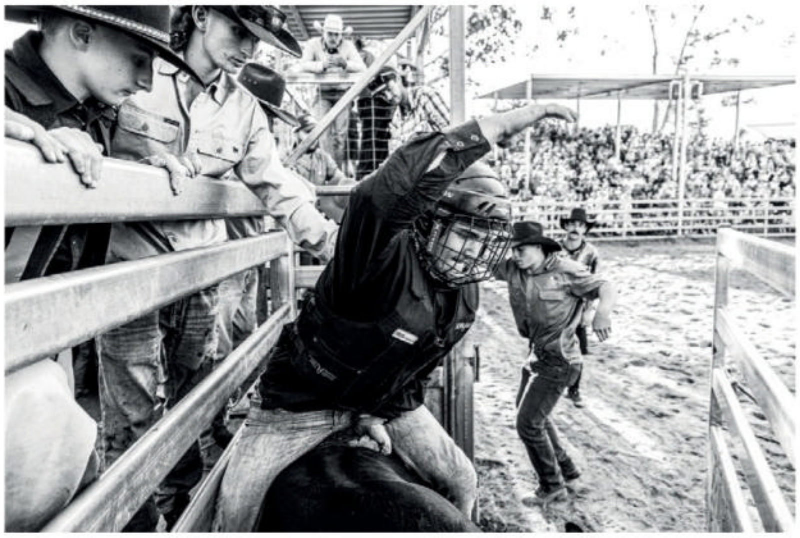
㉑ **JENNIE GROOM** GREAT AUNTIE RUTH



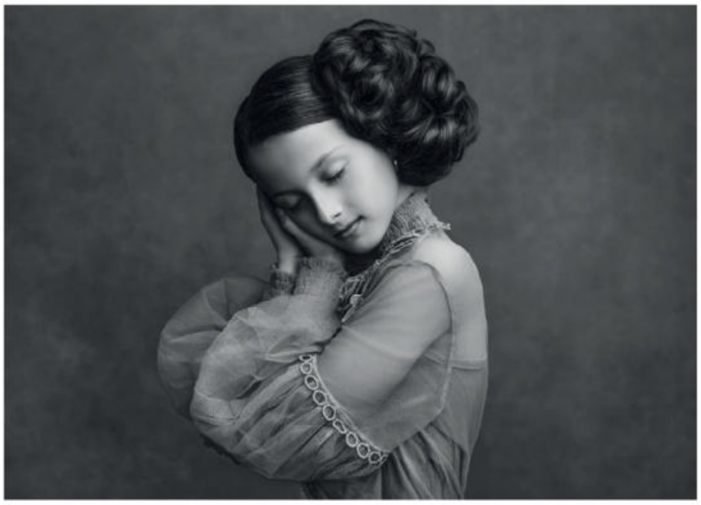
㉒ **RICHARD MISQUITTA** TAILOR - CHANDNI CHOWK



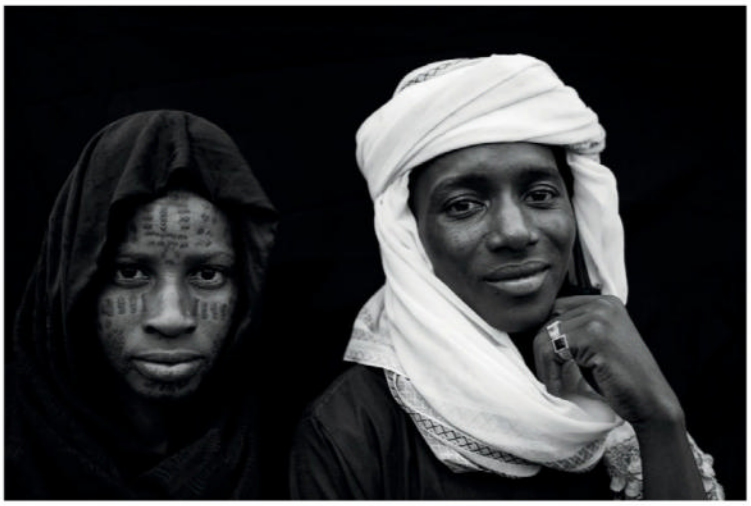
㉕ **ALLAN CUMMINS** THE WANDERER



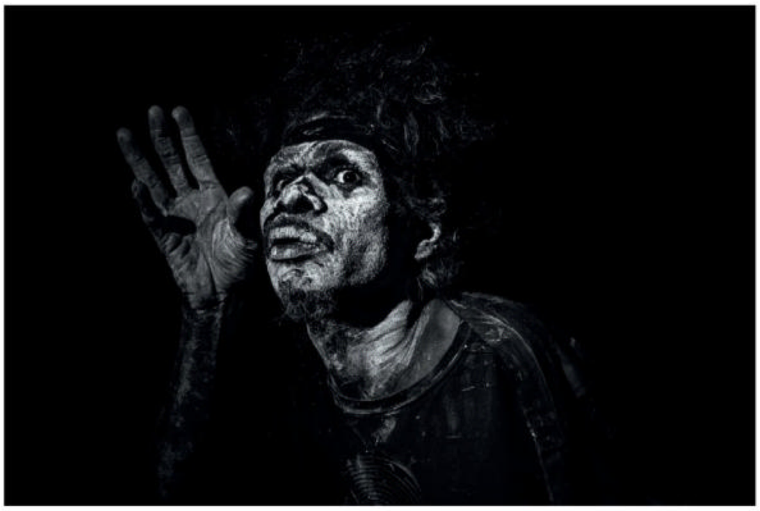
㉖ **CLIFF SHIPTON** NOT MY FIRST RODEO



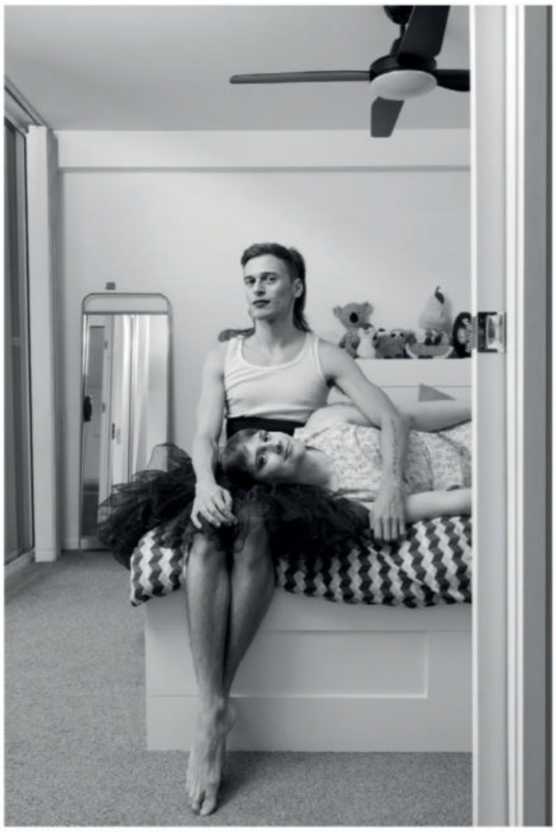
27 **HEIDI MARGOCSY** HUSH



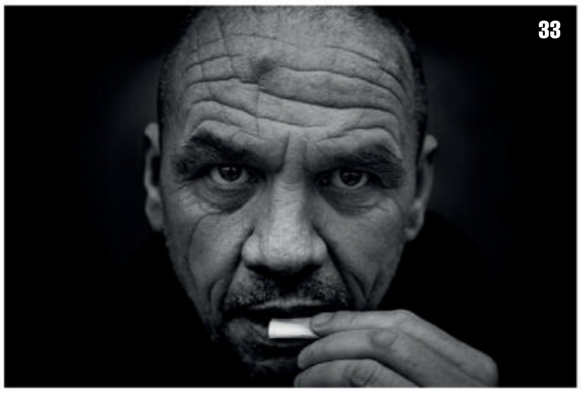
28 **INGETJE TADROS** THE CHOOSEN ONE?



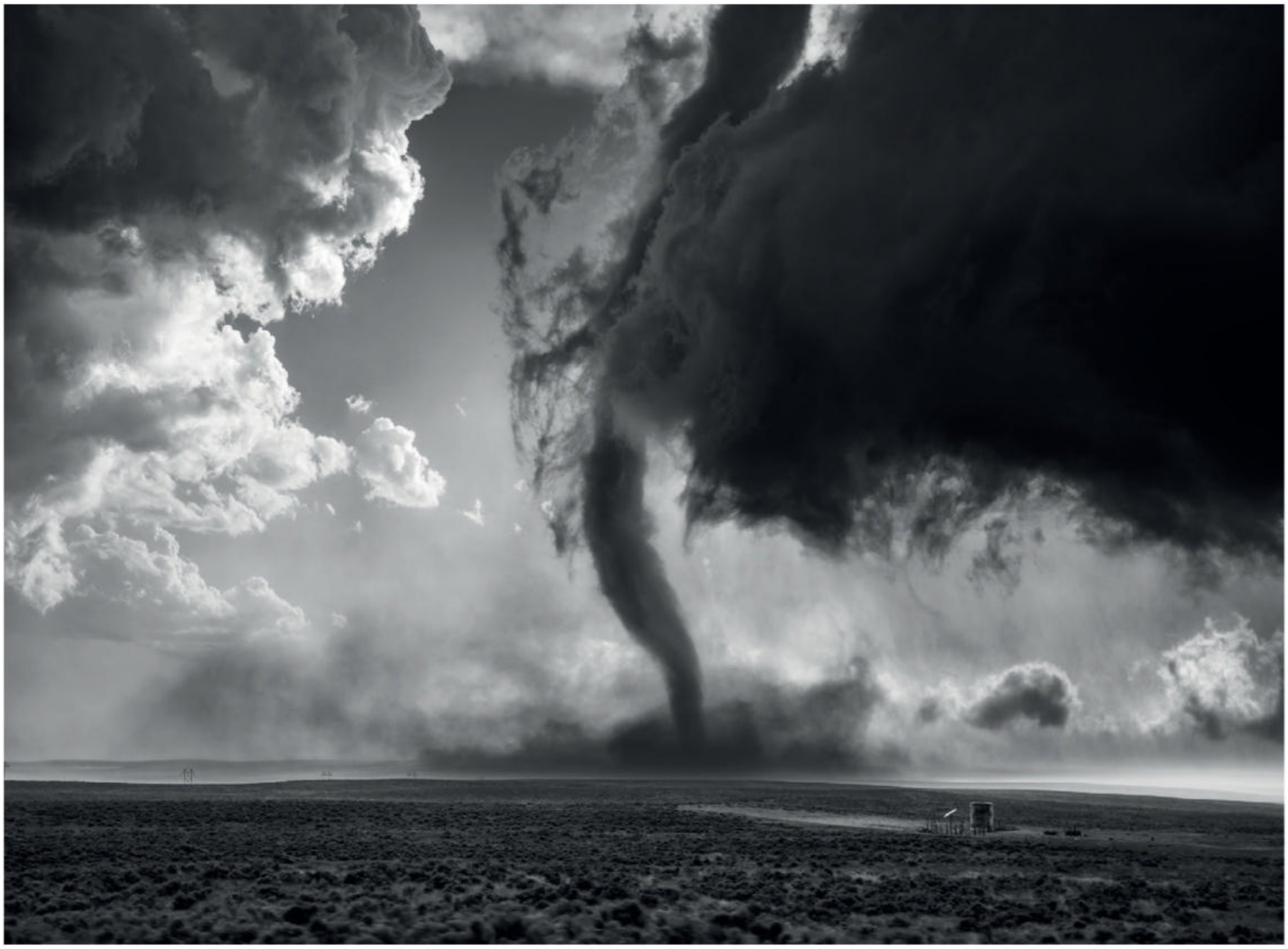
29 **DARRIAN TRAYNOR** HARRY



30 **FERNANDA PEDROSO** TRADICIONAL LOVE



㉛ **ELIZA COTTONWOOD** DRIFTING ㉜ **MARK GRIFFIN** RAY
㉝ **BEN WILKINSON** WHATCHYA LOOKIN AT BRO? ㉞ **MICHAEL MACPHERSON** NYX ASCENDING
㉟ **AMBER BOTTERILL** MONOCHROMATIC HAZE ㊱ **KIM TALENTO** SOLITUDE
㊲ **SARAH JENKINS** TRIBAL SCARIFICATION ㊳ **GAVIN LIBOTTE** OF BIRDS AND MEN
㊴ **DARCIE COLLINGTON** JUMP ㊵ **BELLA GALE** THE NEXT GENERATION



WINNER WILL EADES

Based in New South Wales, Will Eades is an award-winning Australian photographer known for capturing the raw power and beauty of the natural world. His work spans storm, landscape, and astrophotography, often chasing extreme weather across remote regions in pursuit of rare atmospheric moments.

@willeadesphotography

__THE HEIGHTS OF AKRON.__ Will Eades' Places category winning image The Heights of Akron was captured on the U.S. Plains during a storm chase through eastern Colorado.

"As the storm structure matured, a violent tornado dropped in front of us, casting dramatic shadows and creating a surreal interplay of light and dust," he says.

"I knew it would be a strong image due to the sheer scale, movement, and the balance between chaos and form — all of which translate powerfully in black and white."

"What struck me most was the way the intense sunlight punches through the storm's flank, illuminating the trailing rain curtains and low scud clouds beneath the supercell. This gave the scene a surreal, almost theatrical quality," he says.

***Prize:** $3,000, **Synology DS923+ 4-bay NAS with two 4tb hard drives valued at** $1,499.*

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

An extraordinary landscape that is dynamic and poignant, especially in the context of today's radical climatic events. The drama and directional light have been masterfully captured in black and white. The glow of light in the background appears to collide with an approaching storm front, creating tension especially around the twister. The small structure in the foreground, along with the receding line of power poles, gives scale and depth, enhancing the photograph's narrative impact. **Jackie Ranken**

The enormity of this event has been wonderfully amplified by the use of black and white. Added to this, the inclusion of the man-made structure adds a scale to a very powerful event. One is left wondering as to what happened next! **Mike Langford**

RUNNER-UP DAVID NIU

Based in Melbourne since 2007, David Niu says his work focuses on candid, unscripted moments – capturing the unpredictable rhythm of life on the street.

Niu photographs in both colour and black and white, each offering a distinct way of seeing, and he uses a dedicated monochrome camera.

"I rarely convert from colour, as I approach monochrome as a separate visual language – more abstract, more experimental. Since I never carry two cameras at once, I commit to one approach each day. This discipline forces me to slow down, see differently, and respond intuitively to what the street offers."

"Ultimately, I come to the street with no expectations – just curiosity. And when the unexpected appears, I press the shutter."

@davids_art_bnw

THE OPERA HOUSE. *David Niu's runner-up image in the Places category, The Opera House, stood out to our judges for its humour and fresh perspective on a classic Sydney landmark.*

"This image was taken on Australia Day in Sydney," says Niu. "The silhouette of two seated passengers – one in a wide-brimmed hat, the other fading into shadow – contrasts with the Opera House, which is both framed and fragmented by the ferry windows."

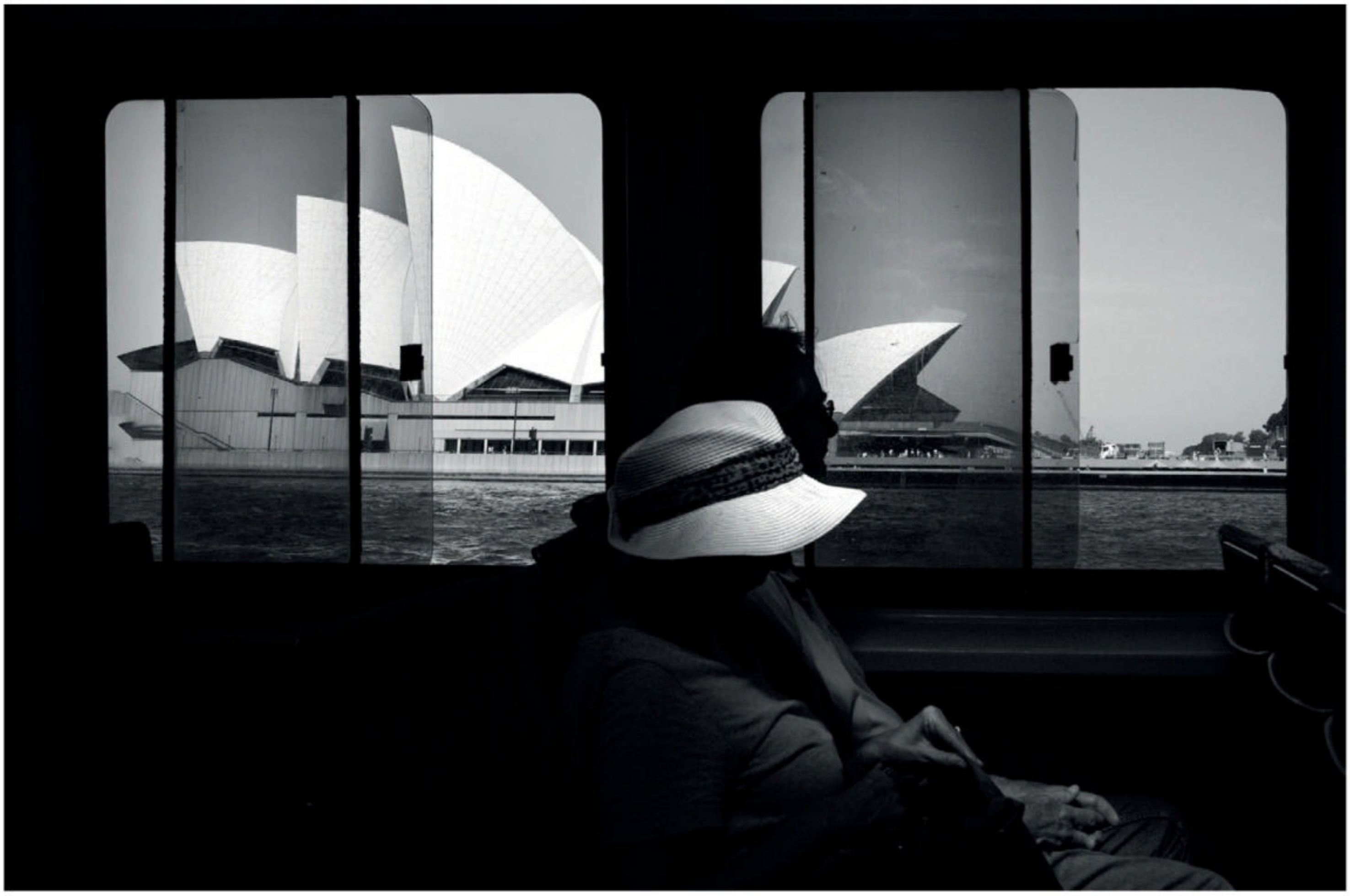
Despite the presence of one of the country's most iconic landmarks, the subjects remain anonymous – a quiet reminder that national celebrations are not just about spectacle, but also about the everyday people who inhabit the landscape.

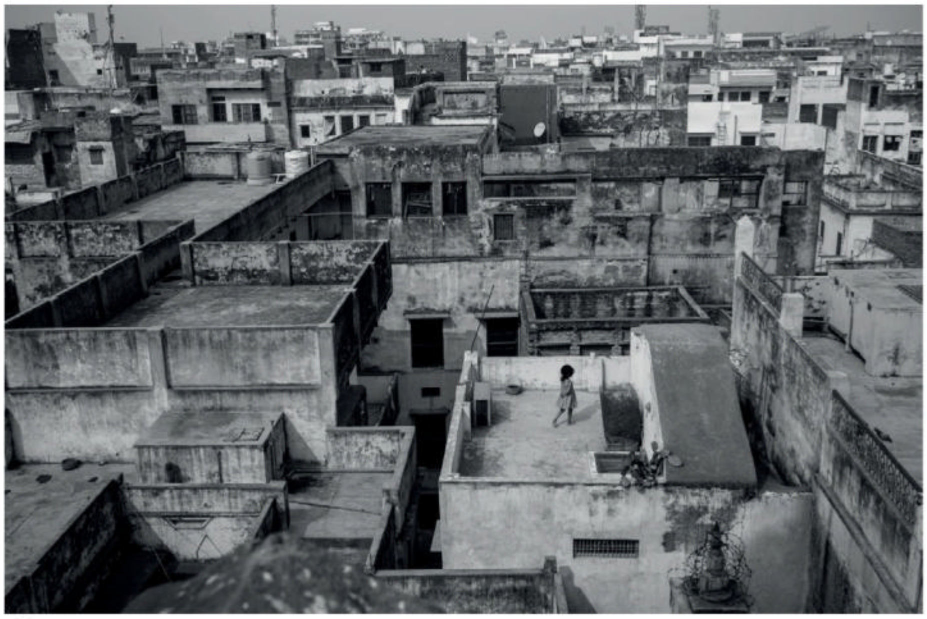
Prize: $1,000 cash.

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

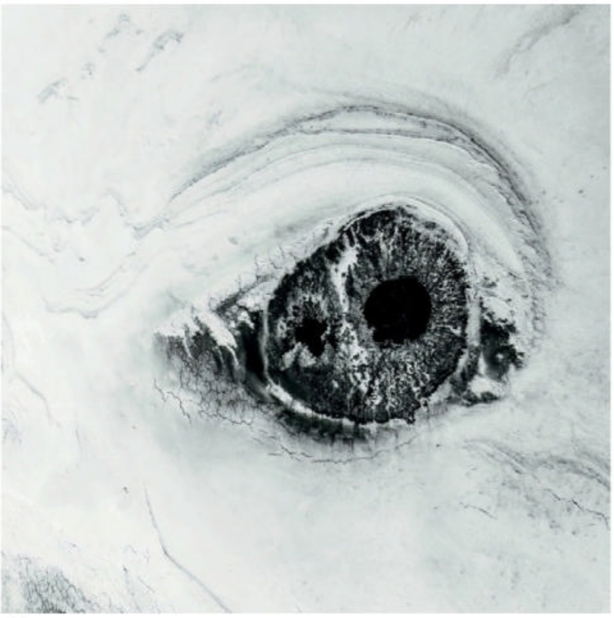
Some moments can't be planned, they are just beautiful serendipitous collisions of visual elements that come together to make magic. Good street photographers have a sixth sense about when random elements are about to align and potentially produce a great image. I think this was one of those moments. **Chris Budgeon**

This image is a unique depiction of Australian culture and identity. The Sydney Opera House is beautifully rendered through overlapping and open window creating a sense of movement through the image. The passengers are captured in silhouette glancing out the window, their hands which provide a sense of humanity in the image, and the juxtaposition with the shape of the hat which plays with the rest of the image. The eye of the photographer in this moment is exceptional. **Matt Palmer**

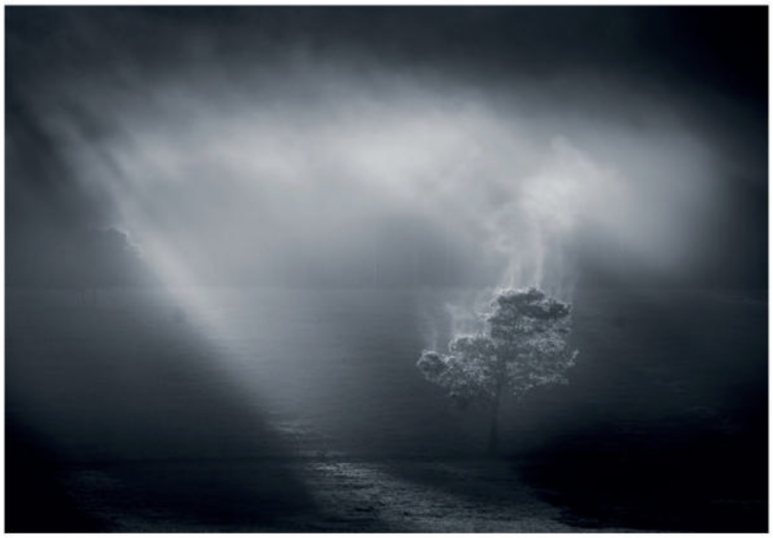




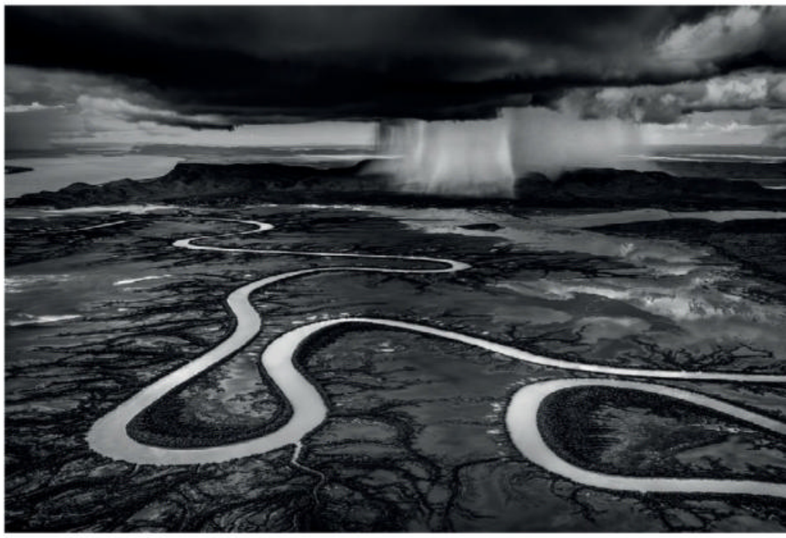
③ **RUSSELL SHAKESPEARE** VARANASI ROOFTOPS



④ **ASHLEY POPE** LADY LOCHIEL



⑦ **JOY KACHINA** BREATHE



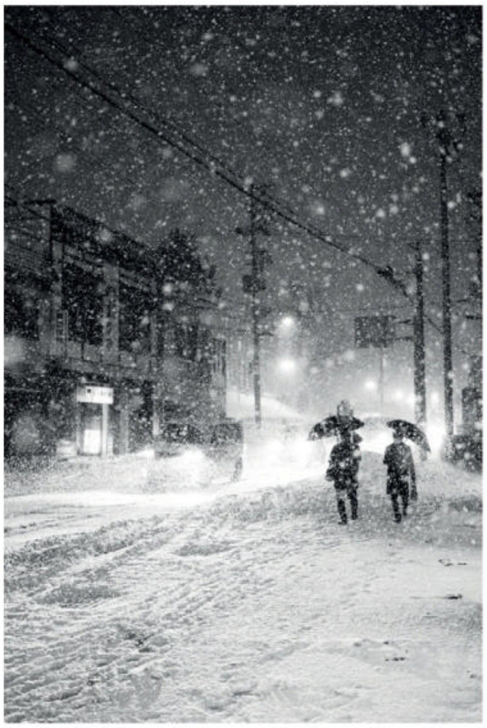
⑧ **TOM PUTT** STORM DUMP

5 **ALAN COLIGADO** BORDERLESS

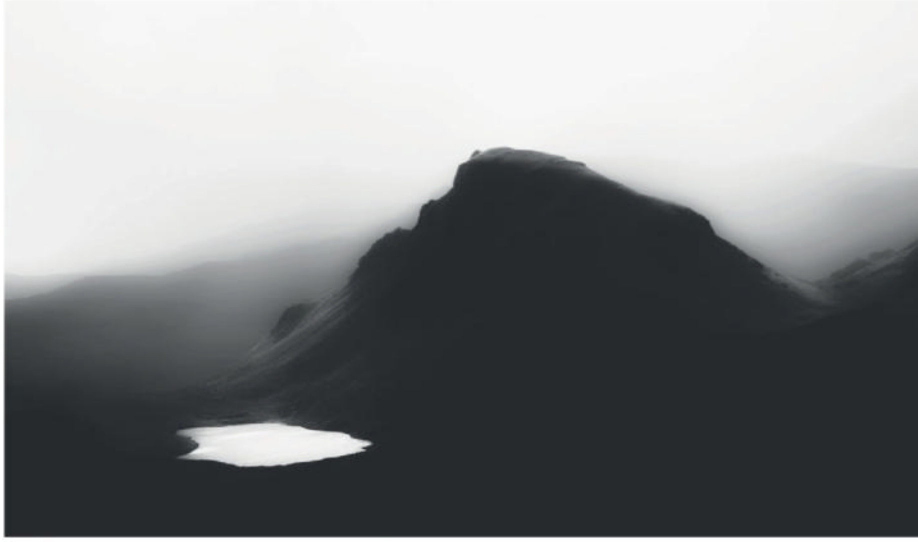
6 **CRAIG MCGOWAN** DECAY

9 **ALEX COPPEL** LAKE TYRRELL'S TEXTURES

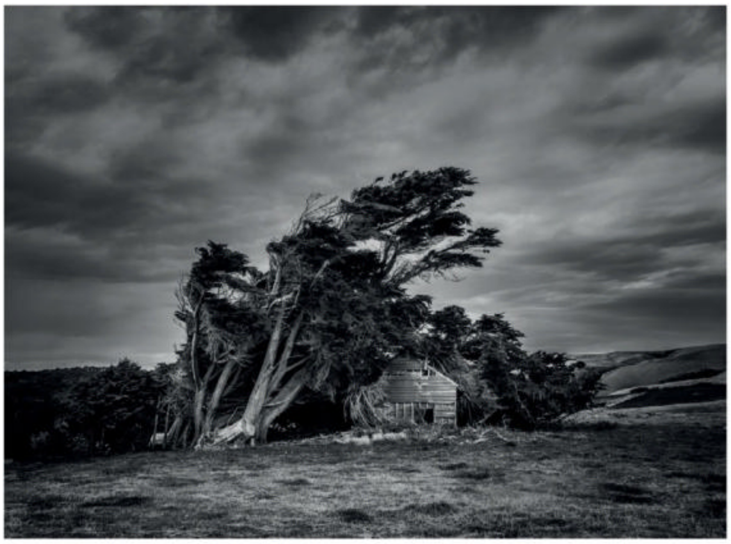
10 **LISA GIELIS** DAMOY POINT ANTARCTICA - HUMANS FOR SCALE



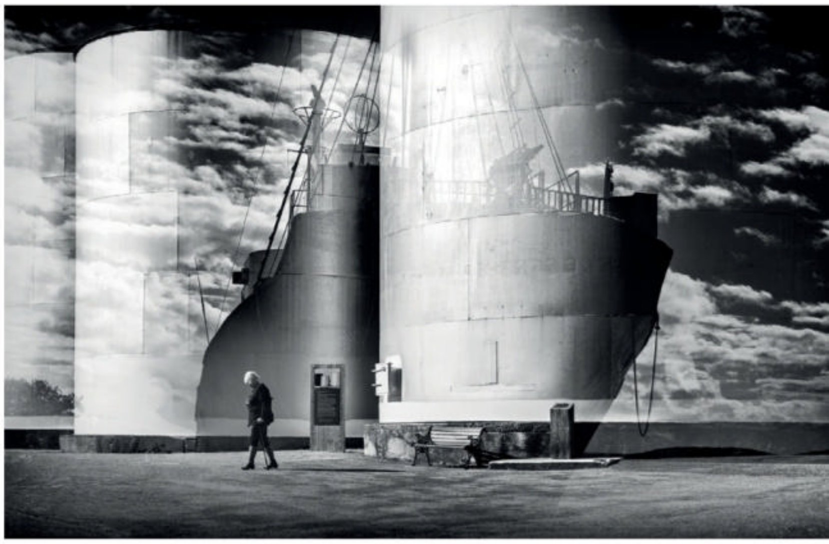
⑪ **PEPIJN THIJSSE** SNOWSTORM WARNING



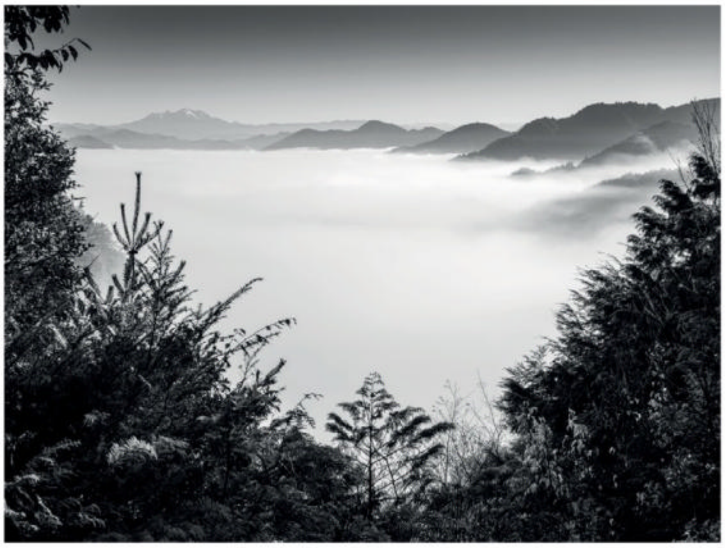
⑫ **ANKIT SINHA** LIGHT AND SHADOW



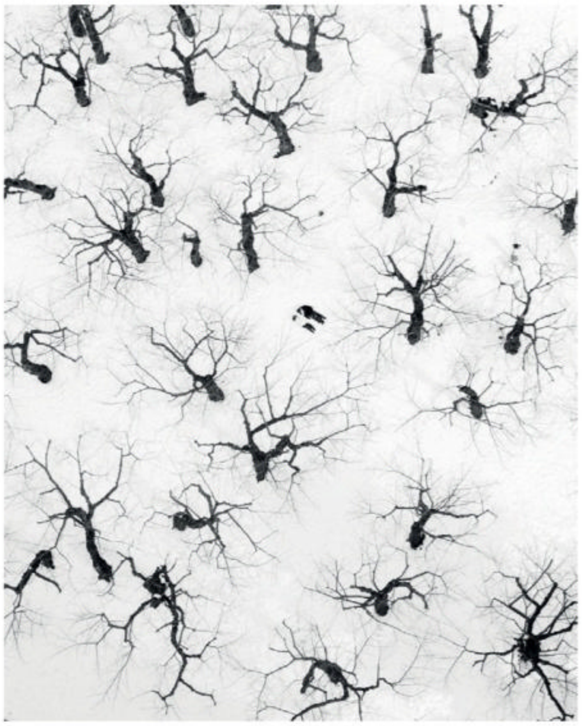
⑮ **KAREN MORLEY** SHELTER, SLOPE POINT



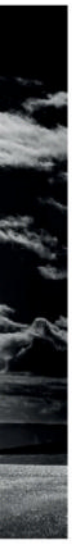
⑯ **ADRIAN DONOGHUE** WHALING STATION REFLECTIONS

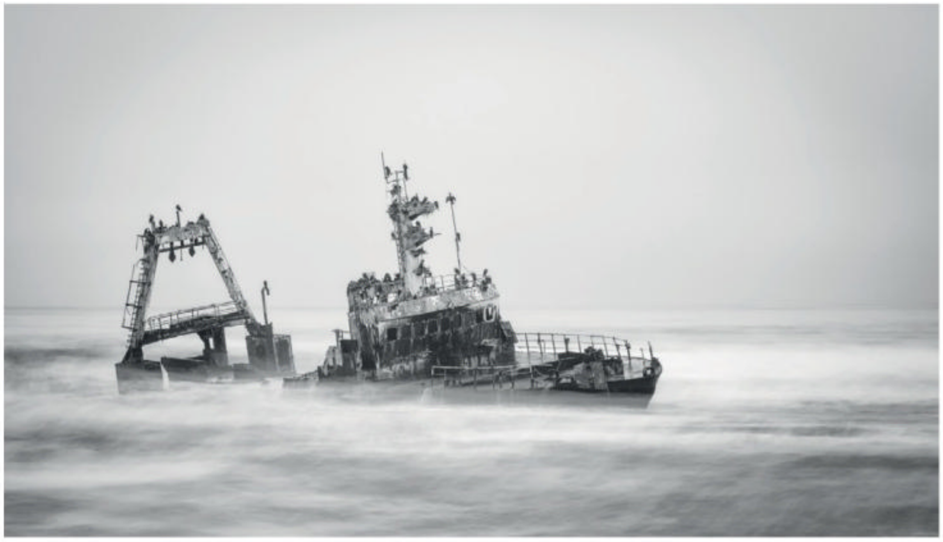


⑬ **LESLEY BRETHERTON** A SEA OF CLOUDS

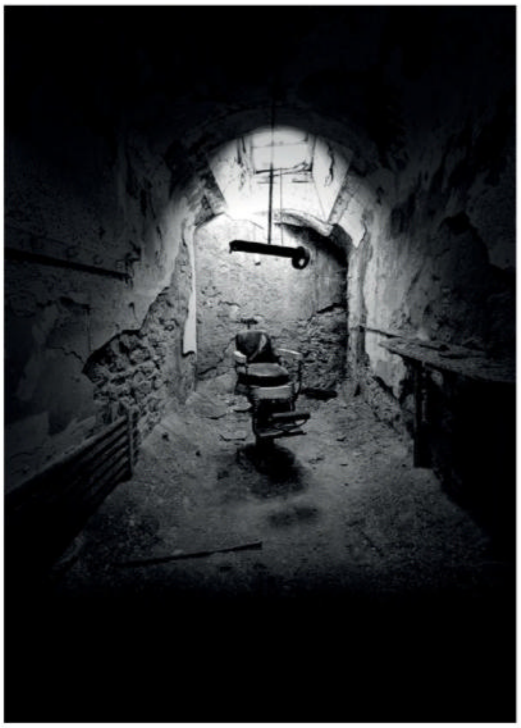


⑭ **PEPIJN THIJSSE** SHAPES OF WINTER

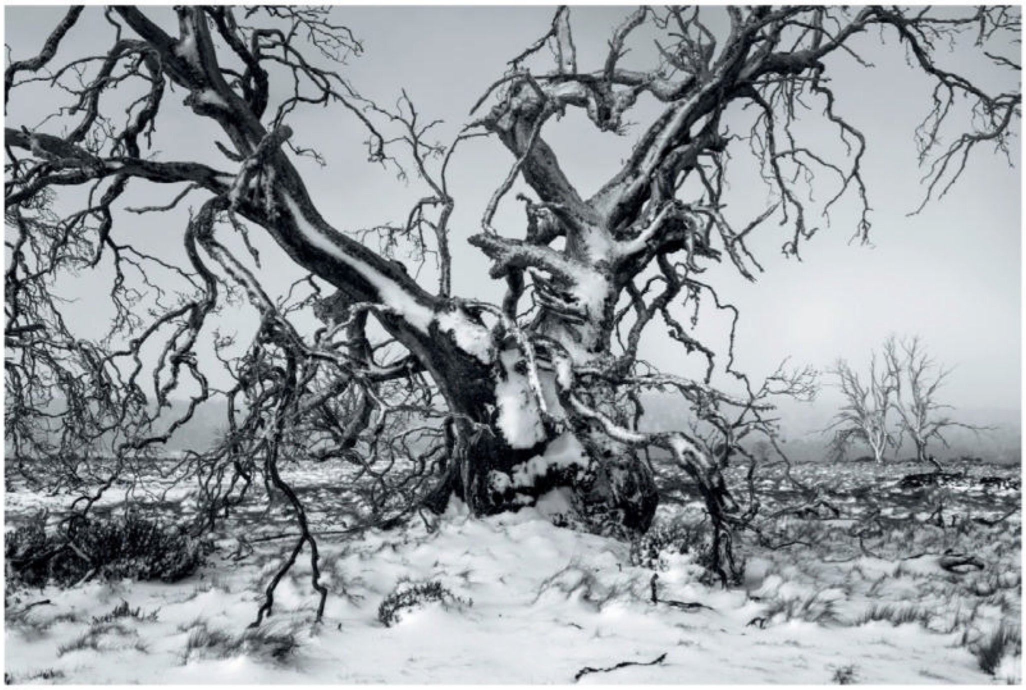




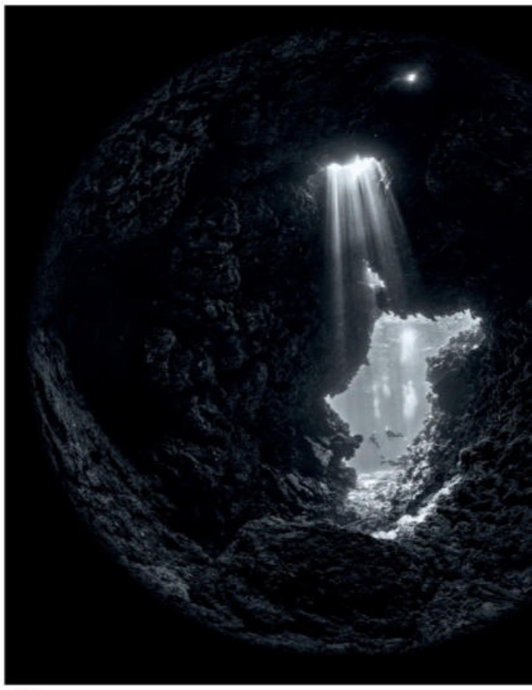
⑰ **MICHELLE DE SWARDT** SHIPWRECK



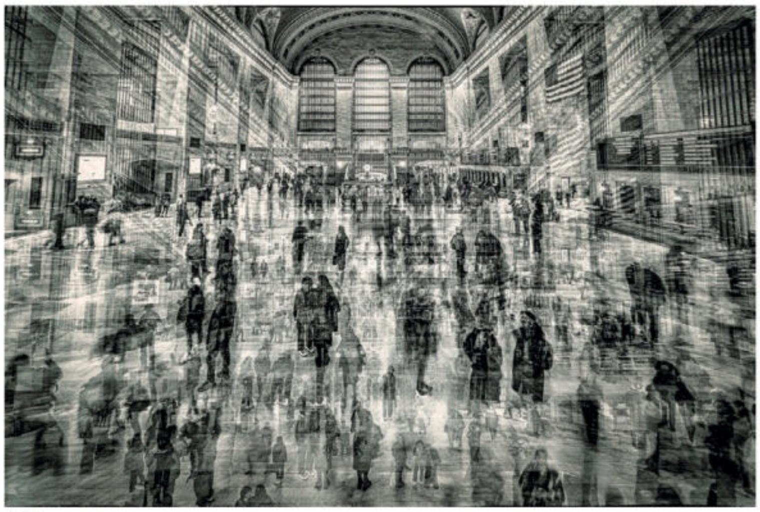
⑱ **DAVID MAHAR**
A FORGOTTEN TIME & PLACE



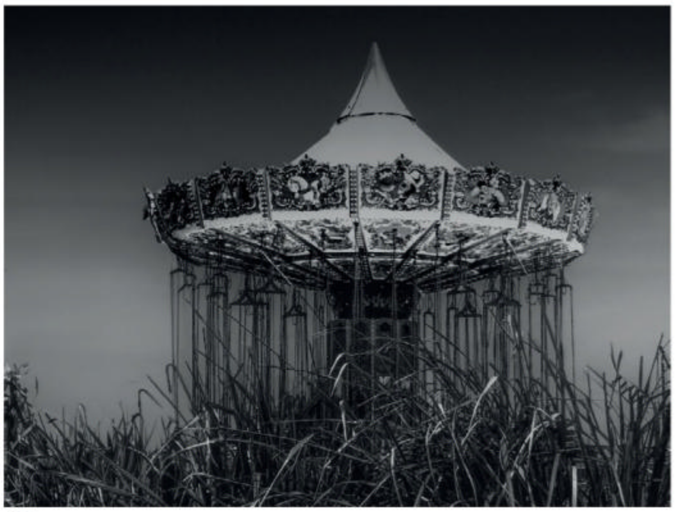
⑲ **JOY KACHINA** ENDANGERED



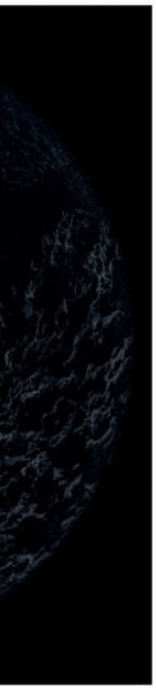
⑳ **DIANA FERNIE** LIFE ON THE OUTSIDE



㉓ **LOUISE HOLLANDS** GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL



㉔ **THERESA HALEY** WAITING FOR THE CROWDS.....

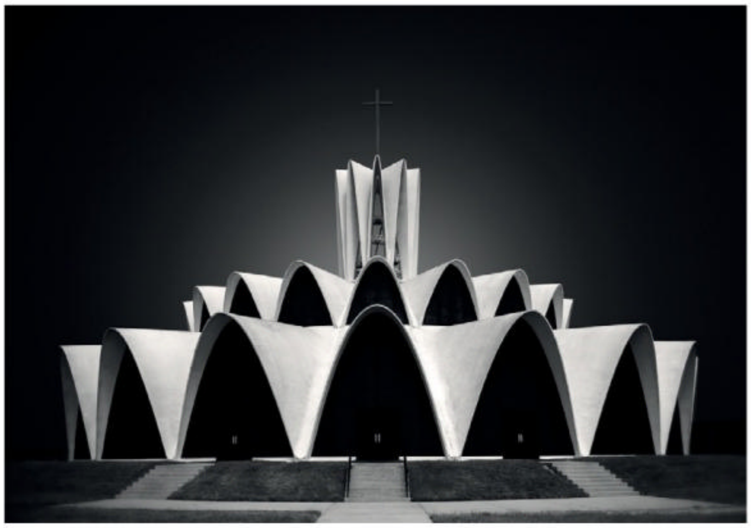


21 **DIANNE KELSEY** STAND ON THE TOP

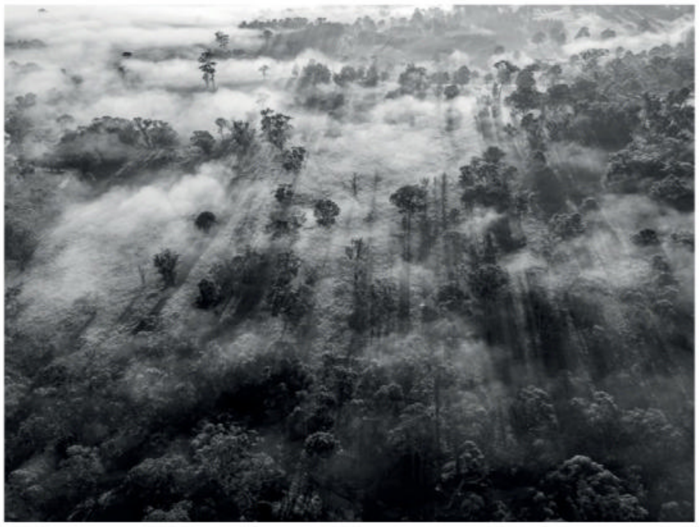
22 **DAVID MERCIECA** THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

25 **ALISON THORBURN** ARCTIC AERIAL

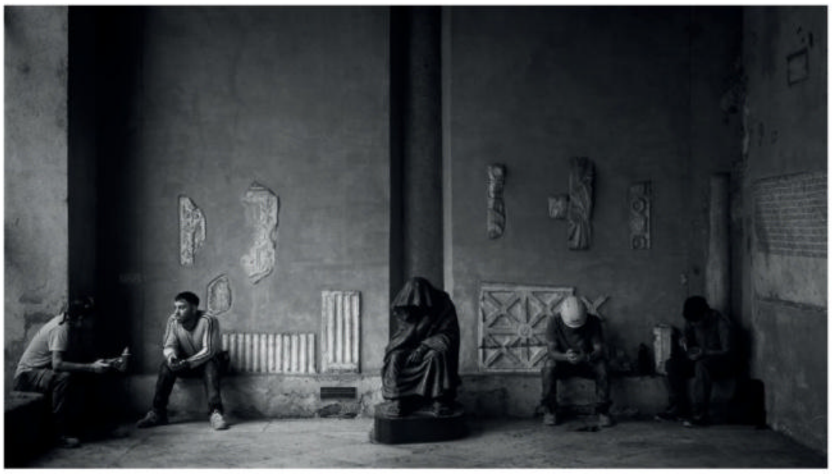
26 **DIANE TODD** LITTLE COTTAGE



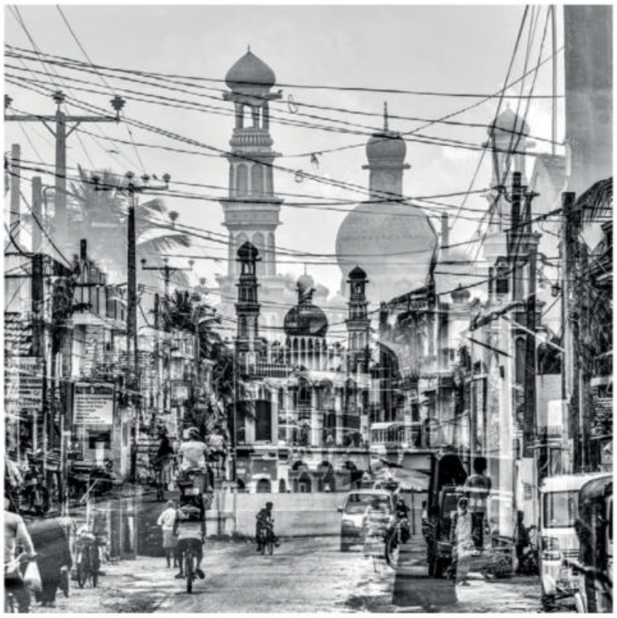
㉗ **MATTHEW TUFFIELD** ABBEY CHURCH OF ST. MARY AND ST. LOUIS



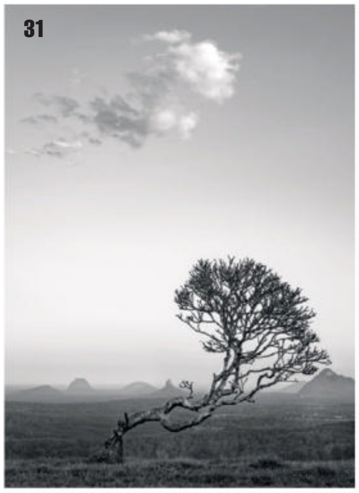
㉘ **CLIFF SHIPTON** FOGGY MORNINGS

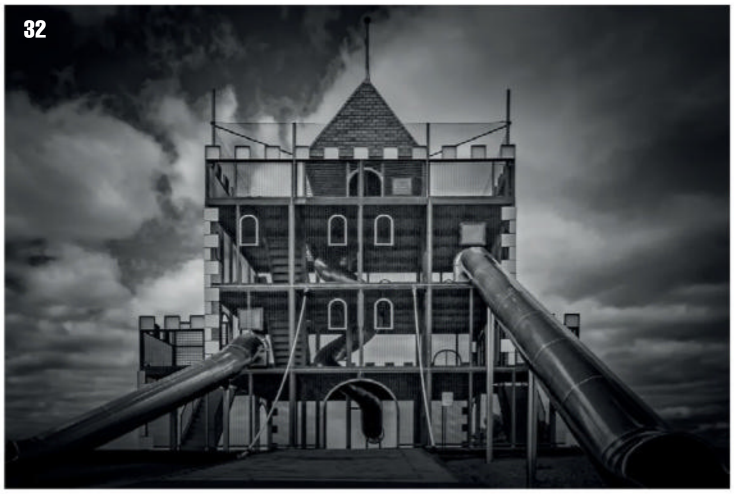


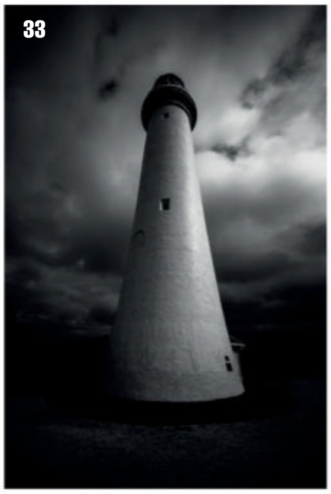
㉙ **RALPH MCCONAGHY** DON'T LINGER HERE...

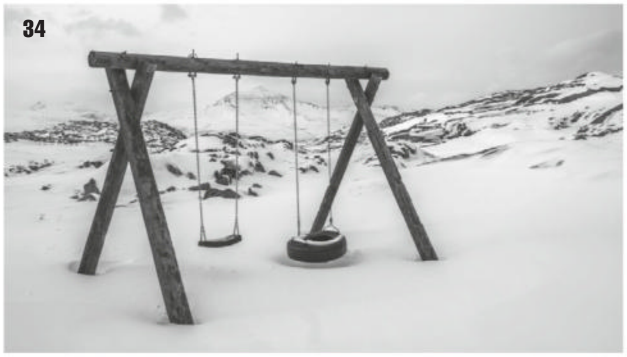


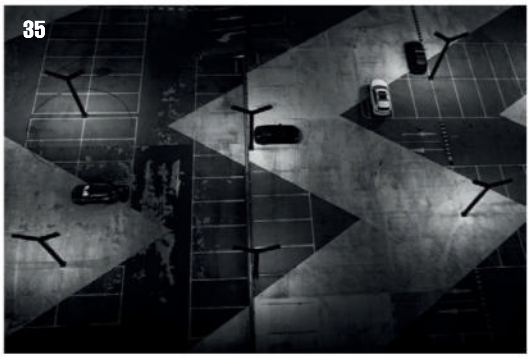
㉚ **GLENDA GORE** ORGANISED MAYHEM

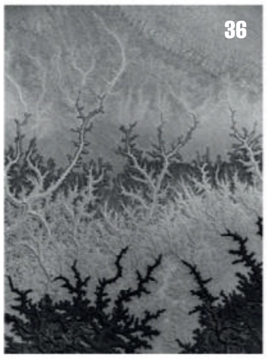


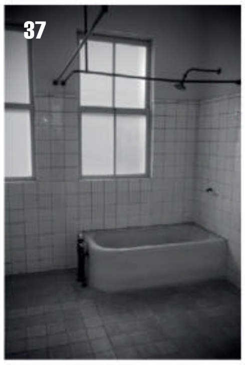


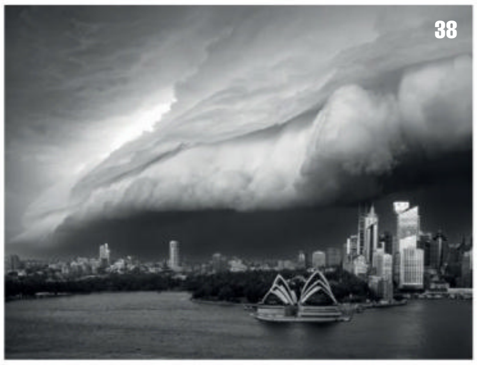


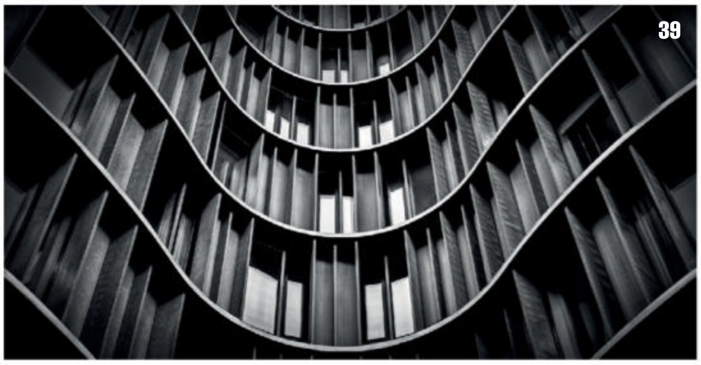




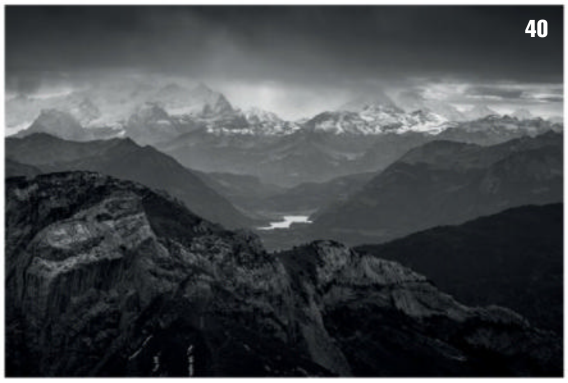


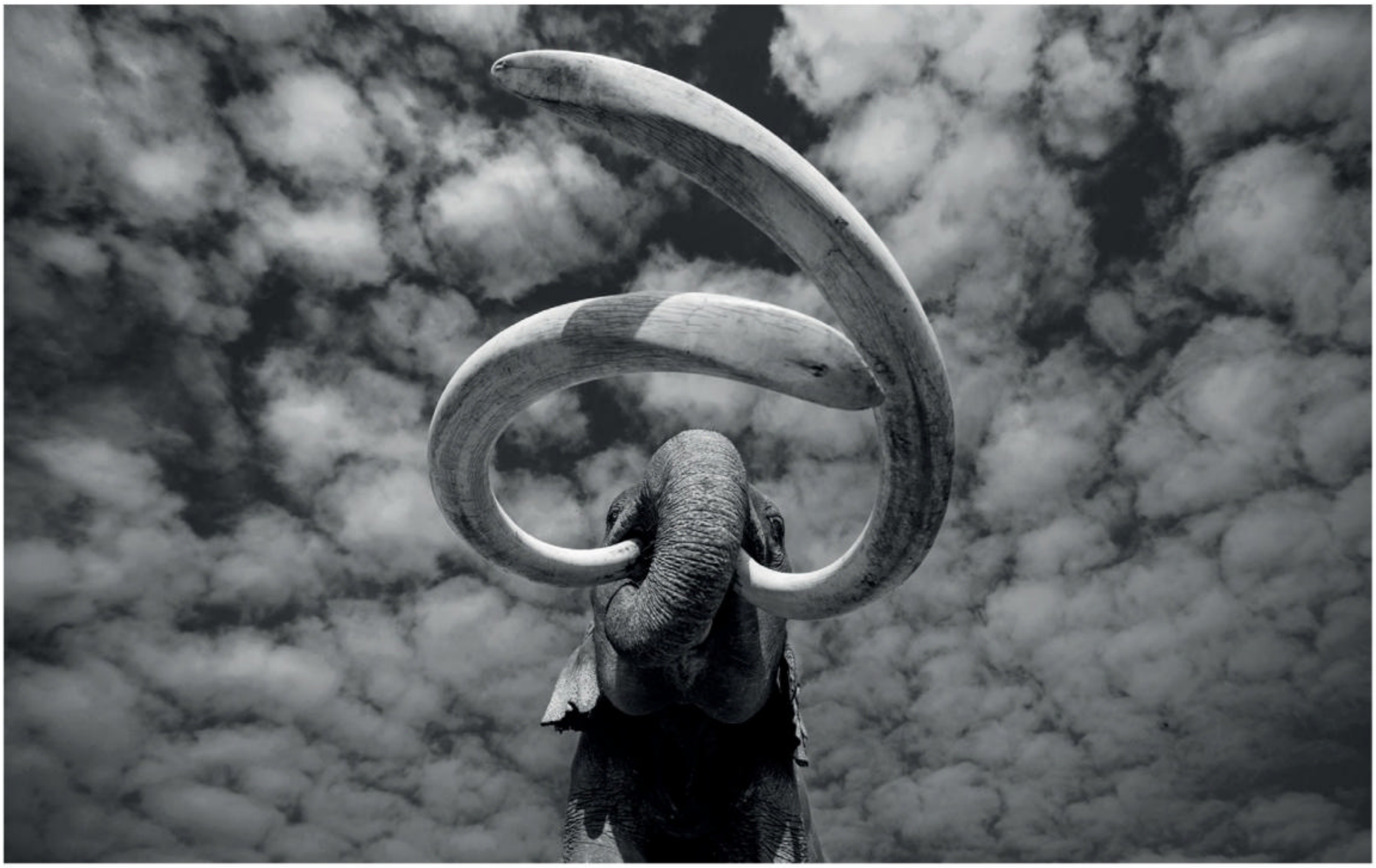






㉛ **LYN ALVES** SCULPTURED BY NATURE. QUEENSLAND
㉜ **PAUL EVANS** SLIDE CASTLE
㉝ **JEFF CULLEN** SPLIT POINT SENTINEL
㉞ **ALISON THORBURN** SOLITARY SWINGS
㉟ **CELIA ANDERSON** CAR PARK
㊱ **POLLY FENTON** FRACTAL PATTERNS
㊲ **HEATHER MARKLAND** CLEAN
㊳ **TERRY DALEY** SHELF CLOUD SYDNEY
㊴ **IRMA FERREIRA** A ROOM FOR THE NIGHT
㊵ **JAMIE MEYER** NESTLE





WINNER GEORGE DIAN BALAN

Belgium's George Dian Balan is a fine art wildlife photographer, scientist, author, and speaker, with significant scientific and conservation experience working with big-tusked African and Asian elephants.

Alongside his photography of these iconic animals, his research has led him to discovering, for the first time in more than 100 years, two new world records: the longest Asian elephant tusk (3.26 m) and the thickest Asian elephant tusk (58 cm), both from India.

@georgedianbalan

WHEN MAMMOTHS RULED THE EARTH. *The climax of over 50 million years of elephant evolution, Dian Balan's Animals category winning image of an Asian Super Tusker sports tusks of the relative size and shape of the southern mammoth, the ancestor of the woolly mammoth.*

"Very few people know that Asian elephants can grow such amazing ivory, as the African big tusked elephants are better known by the public," explains Dian Balan.

It is thought that just 40 big tusked bulls from each of the two species of African and Asian elephants are left today, out of which just a handful can be considered Super Tuskers, blessed with the largest and longest ivory tusks.

At almost 2.75 metres long, the strongly curved tusks of this particular elephant were deliberately framed by Dian Balan against the sky when the subject lifted its head while eating, to create a clean and simple composition.

"This is the finest elephant amongst great elephants, and as close as one can get to past times that have captured our imagination," he says.

***Prize:** $3,000, **Synology DS923+ 4-bay NAS with two 4tb hard drives valued at** $1,499.*

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

This is an outstanding image and a unique perspective that has been skilfully planned and captured. It's also a great example of when everything lines up for a perfect shot – the exposure, clouds, composition and light all fall into line at the right moment. To create this, the low angle of the sun lighting the elephant is critical. In fact, I believe this image would be impossible in midday sun as elephants are notoriously difficult to capture and expose for in hard light. Ultimately, what George has shown is a great example of how a unique angle can transform an image, producing something truly captivating. **Jay Collier**

A highly original viewpoint that has been made even stronger by the use of black and white. The framing is visually dynamic and the graphics of the tusks set against a mottled sky make for one hell of a strong image. **Mike Langford**

RUNNER-UP LILLY SIEMON

After completing Year 12 in 2023, Sydney's Lilly Siemon has focused her time on developing her photography skills.

"Over the past two years, I have studied at TAFE, successfully completing a Certificate IV in Photography and Digital Imaging, and I'm currently working toward my Diploma," she says.

She describes herself as having a passion for visual storytelling and a commitment to refining her technical and creative abilities, something she's done to perfection with her runner-up winning image *Henry's nose.*

@lillysvisualgallery

HENRY'S NOSE. *"'Henry's Nose' is an entirely experimental image," explains Siemon.*

"The image was taken with a macro lens I had borrowed for a few weeks, and while taking macro shots of the flowers in my backyard, my dog attempted to eat my camera, which turned into a spur of the moment image – no planning was involved," she says.

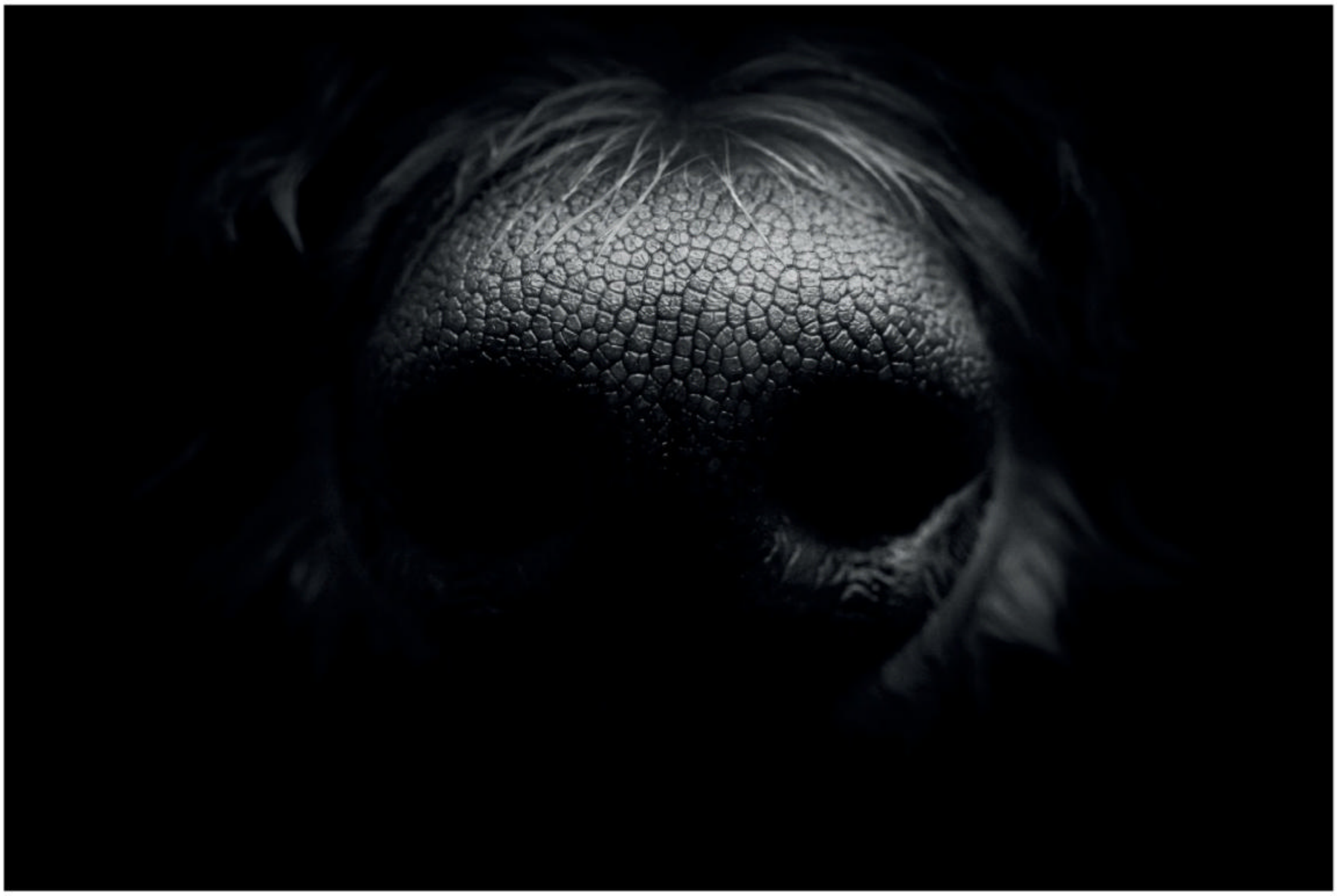
"The editing was not a planned process either, and while I like creating black and white images, this image felt more dramatic than other images I have created. Entering the Mono Awards was entirely experimental too!"

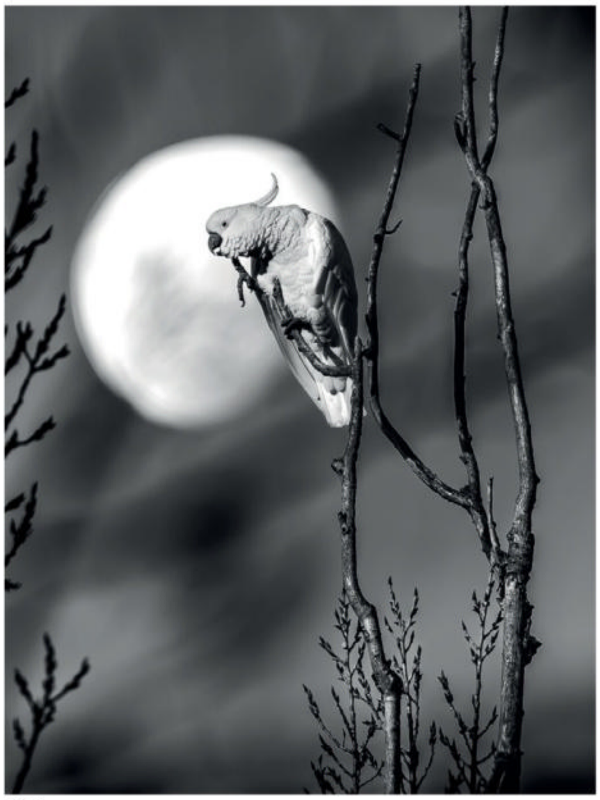
***Prize**: $1,000 cash.*

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

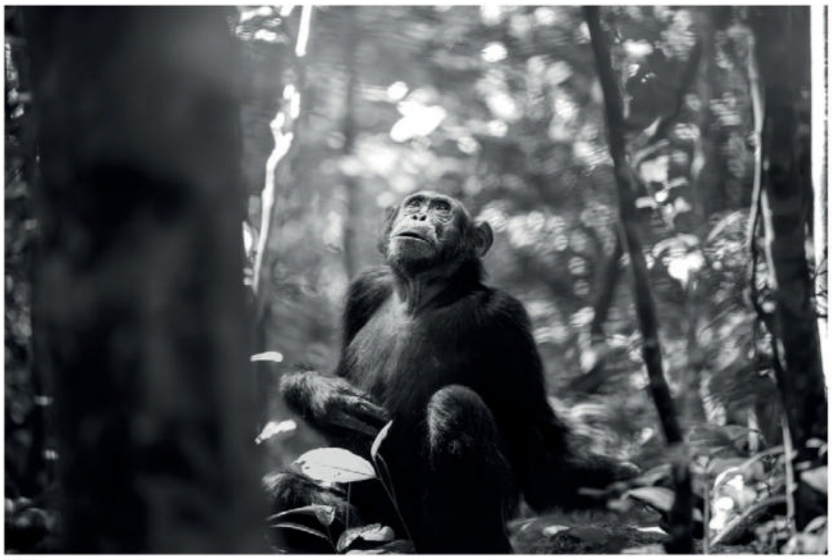
This monochrome macro image demonstrates strong technical skill and artistic intent. The tight frame draws our attention to the fine contours of the nose, while the lighting adds depth and mood. Its minimalism creates an intimate and visually compelling image which reflects a thoughtful artistic approach. **Helen Whittle**

This image of Henry captures wonderful detail, drawing the viewer's attention to the intricate ridges of his unique nose fingerprint. The masterful use of contrast and composition creates a powerful focal point that emphasises the beauty of its simplicity. **Alex Cearns OAM**

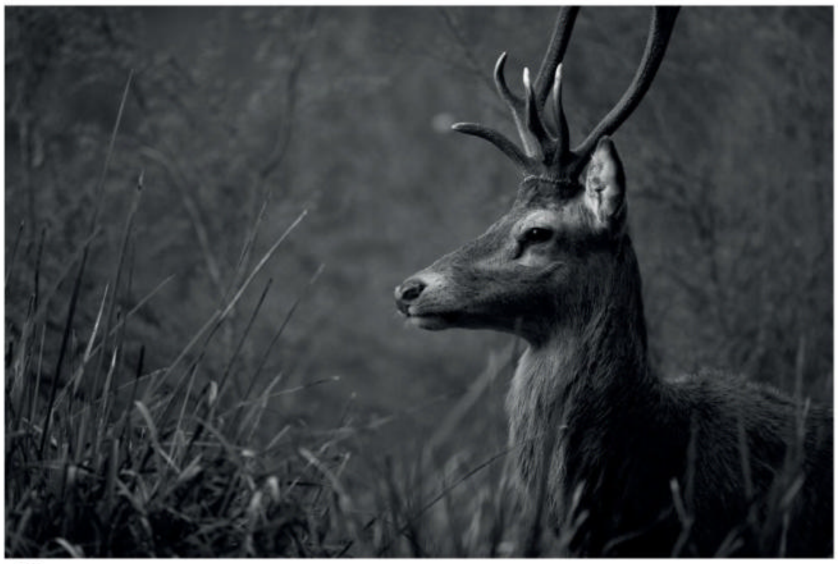




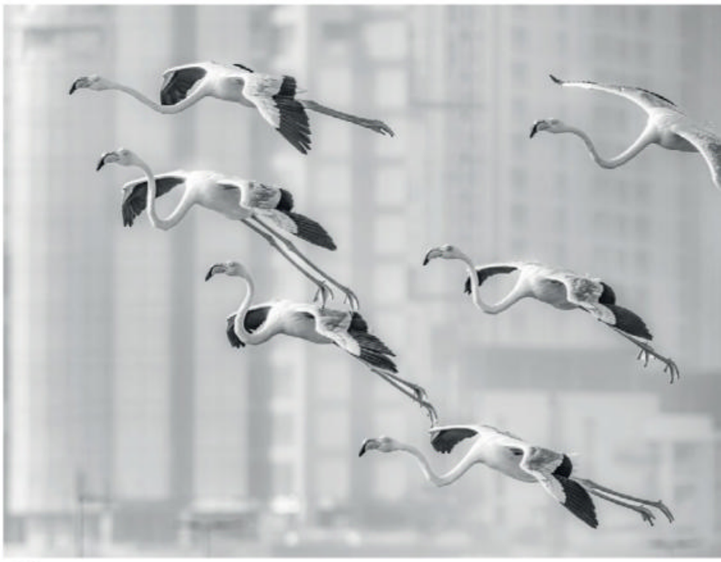
③ **RUDY KALELE** COCKATOO VS MOON



④ **NINA BOWLES** A MOMENT OF REFLECTION

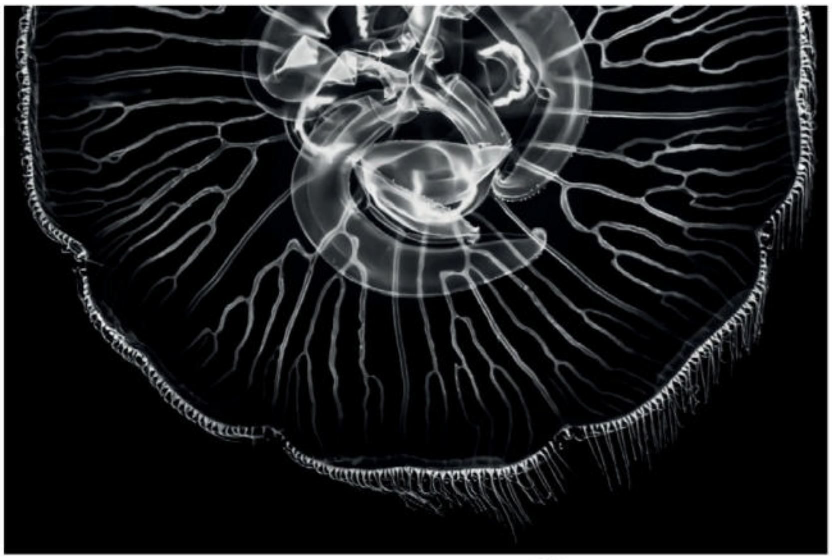


⑦ **AMBER NOSEDA** KING OF THE BUSH



⑧ **GERI MILNE** FIFO WORKERS OF DUBAI

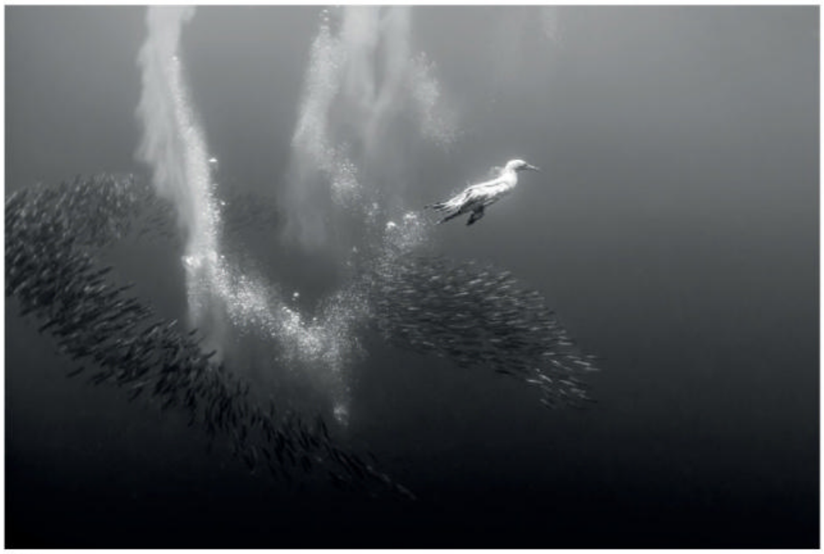
5 **JASON MOORE** BACKLIT ROO



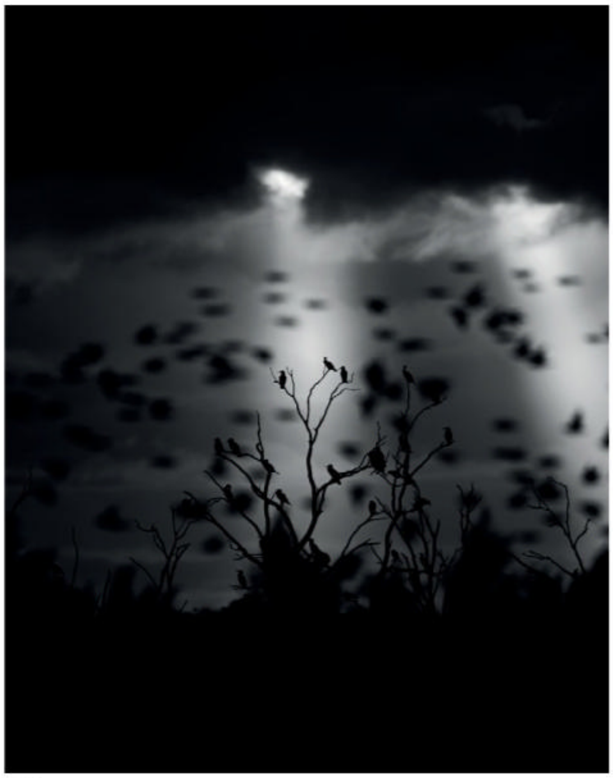
6 **KATE SNOW** JELLYFISH

9 **CAROLINE TRENFIELD** THE SILENT PLEA

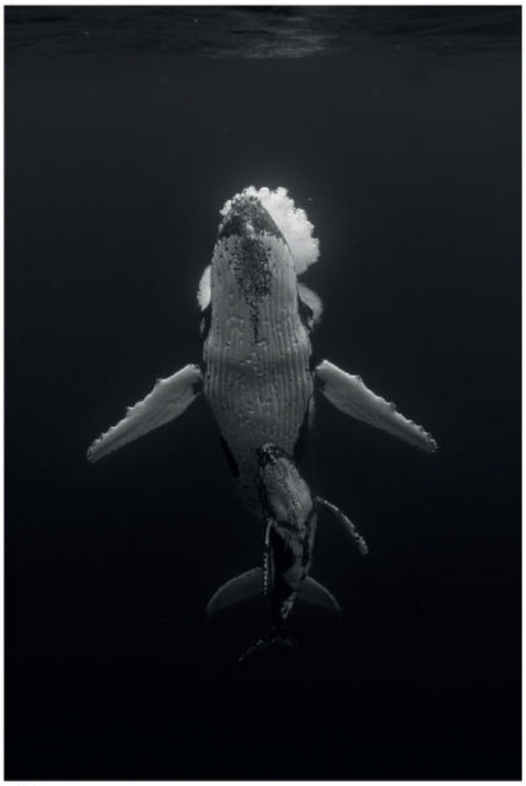
10 **NICK GREEN** FUR SEAL



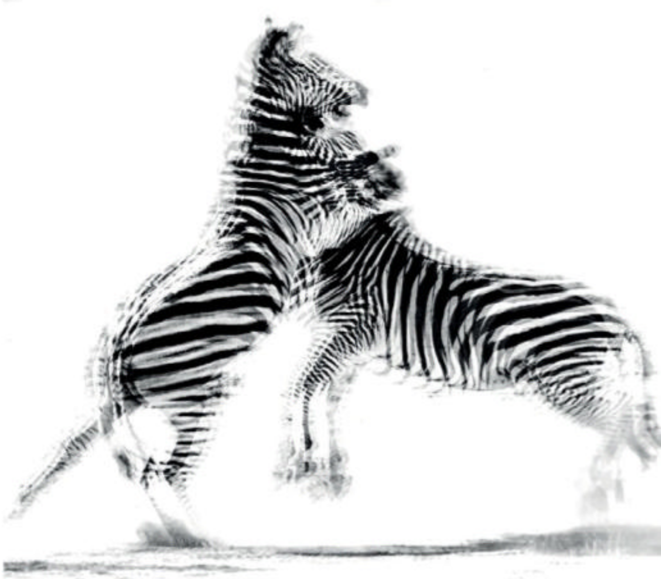
⑪ **FABI FREGONESI** THE DIVE



⑫ **LASITHA LIYANA PATABENDI** THE SPOT LIGHT



⑮ **GABRIELLE LUI** A BREATH TOGETHER



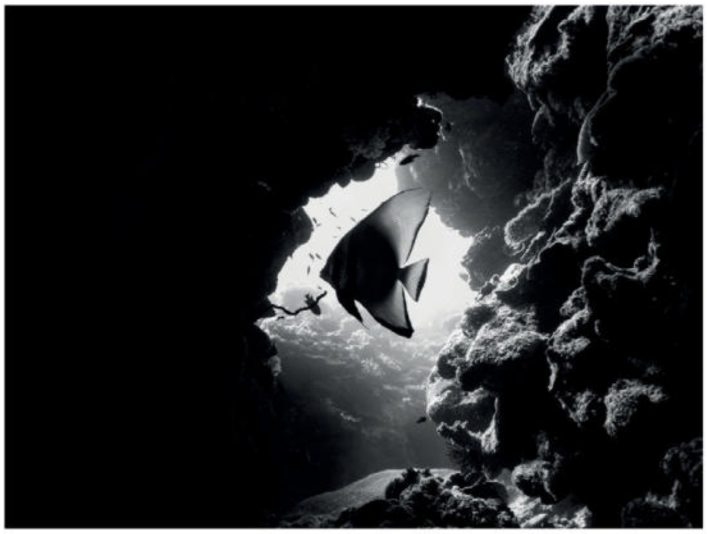
⑯ **JULIE MITCHELL** THE CONTEST

⑬ **FABI FREGONESI** LUNCH TIME

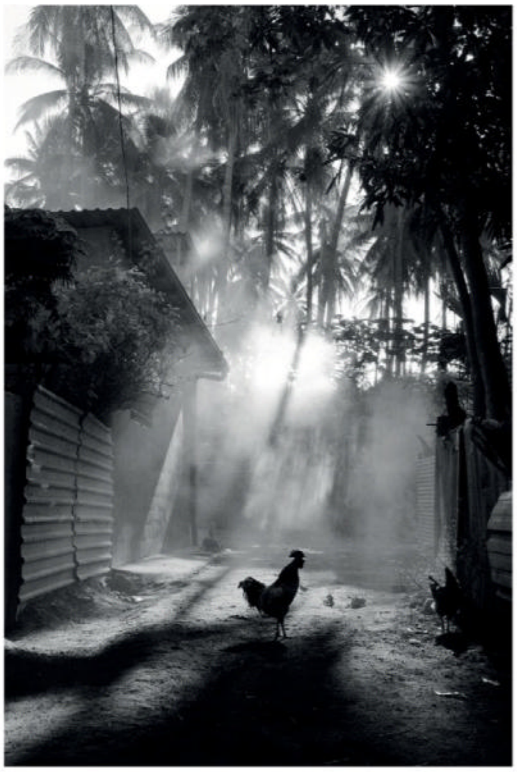
⑭ **CLAUDIO MORENO MADRID** HINEHINA

⑰ **ROWAN DEAR** SLEEPING GIANTS

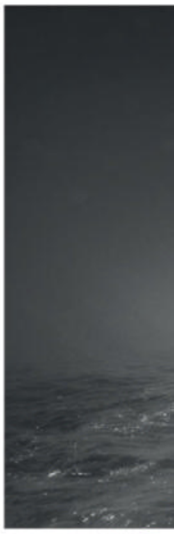
⑱ **NEIL KENDALL** NIGHT EYES

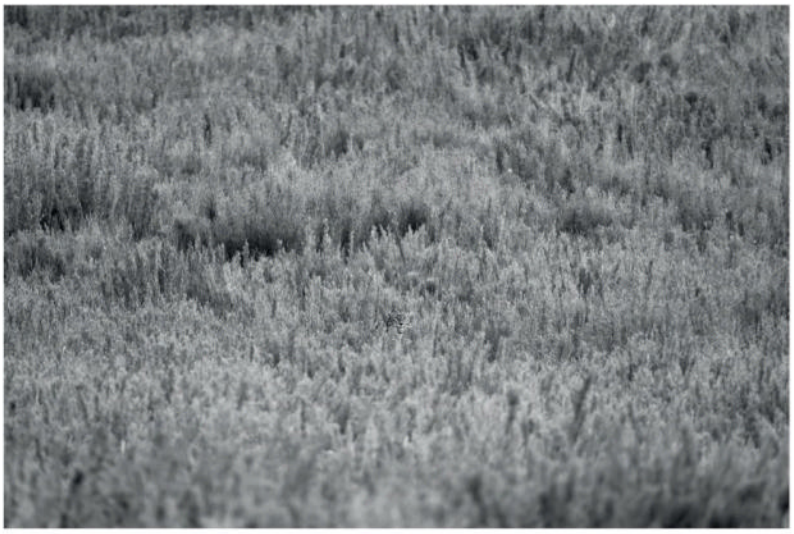


⑲ **ALEJANDRO OTERO** THE BATSIGNAL

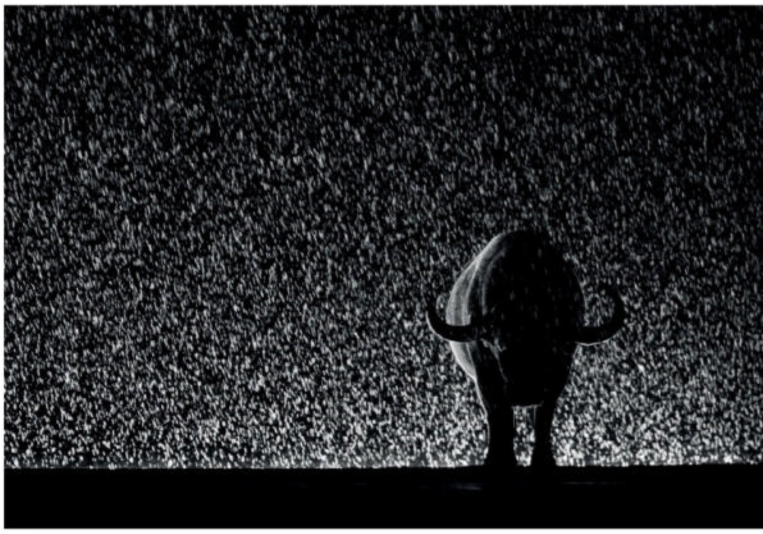


⑳ **JEREMY SKIRROW** THE ROOSTER'S CROW





㉓ **JAYATHU AMARASINGHE** FIND THE WALDO



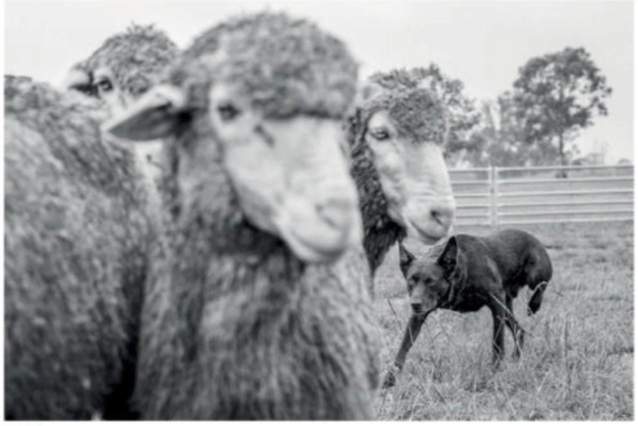
㉔ **NEIL KENDALL** BUFFALO RAIN

㉑ **REMUNA BECA** WHALE DREAMS

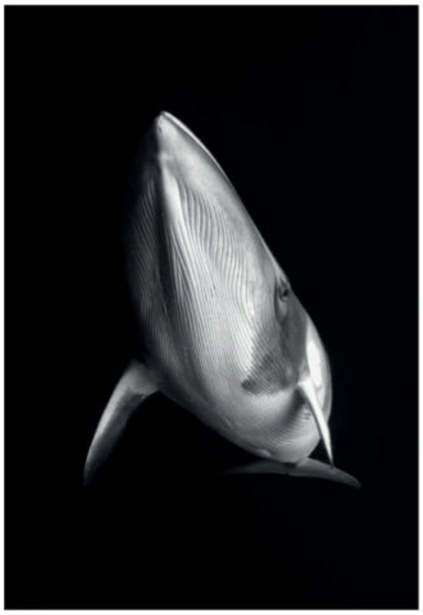
㉒ **NEIL KENDALL** A MOTHER'S NIGHT WATCH

㉕ **SONIA FRIEDRICH** HERON - UNEXPECTED

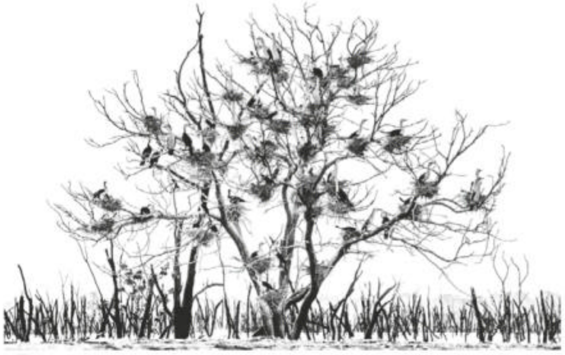
㉖ **EMMA JONES** FAMILY DYNAMICS



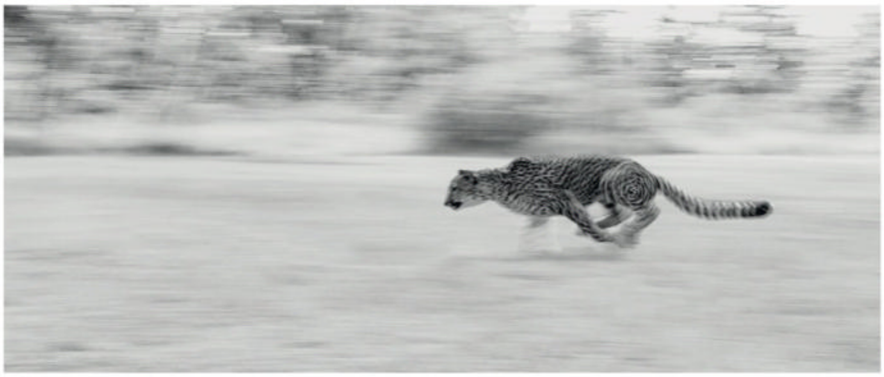
27 **LINDA LEMAN** I'M NOT GUNNA TELL YOU AGAIN



28 **MARCIA RIEDERER** MINKE WHALE



29 **MAL CARNEGIE** NESTED NETWORK



30 **BENJAMIN LIEW** SPOT MOTION

31

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㉛ **LASITHA LIYANA PATABENDI** STARLINGS ONLY
㉜ **ANNMARIE FINN** PURRFECT PAIR
㉝ **MATT KRUMINS** TAILS OF A CROCODILE
㉞ **FABI FREGONESI** DANCING WHALE
㉟ **WAYNE SORENSEN** MIDNIGHT HUNTERS
㊱ **NGAIRE HART** SUBANTARTIC ROYAL PENGUINS BREEDING
㊲ **HAYDEN TURNER** WISDOM AND TRUST
㊳ **DEB FORD** LET THE BATTLE BEGIN
㊴ **JENNIFER CHASSAGNOL** FOGGY MORNING WALK
㊵ **SALLY EDWARDS** FEEDING IN THE GRASS

40

MEANT TO BE MONOCHROME

Black and white can take the most dramatic scenes to another level entirely. Here's how this stunning waterfall image was captured.

WITH GREG MCMILLAN

Capturing this waterfall in a dark forest on the Isle of Skye in Scotland, the sound of rushing water filled the air and the wind gusted through the trees carrying the scent of wet earth and moss: the atmosphere exuded a mystical quality.

Adding to the experience was the challenge of capturing the image. While my tripod was adjusted for the different levels of rocks, the high wind still made it difficult to keep the camera stable for a slow shutter speed shot while I was also trying to remain safe and out of the running water.

Tea-stained by the nearby peat, the waterfall contrasted sharply with the lush greens of the forest, lending a unique tone to the initial photograph. To frame the shot, I positioned myself to use the surrounding foliage as a natural border. This draws the eye into the scene, creating depth and providing a satisfying contrast between light and dark in the image.

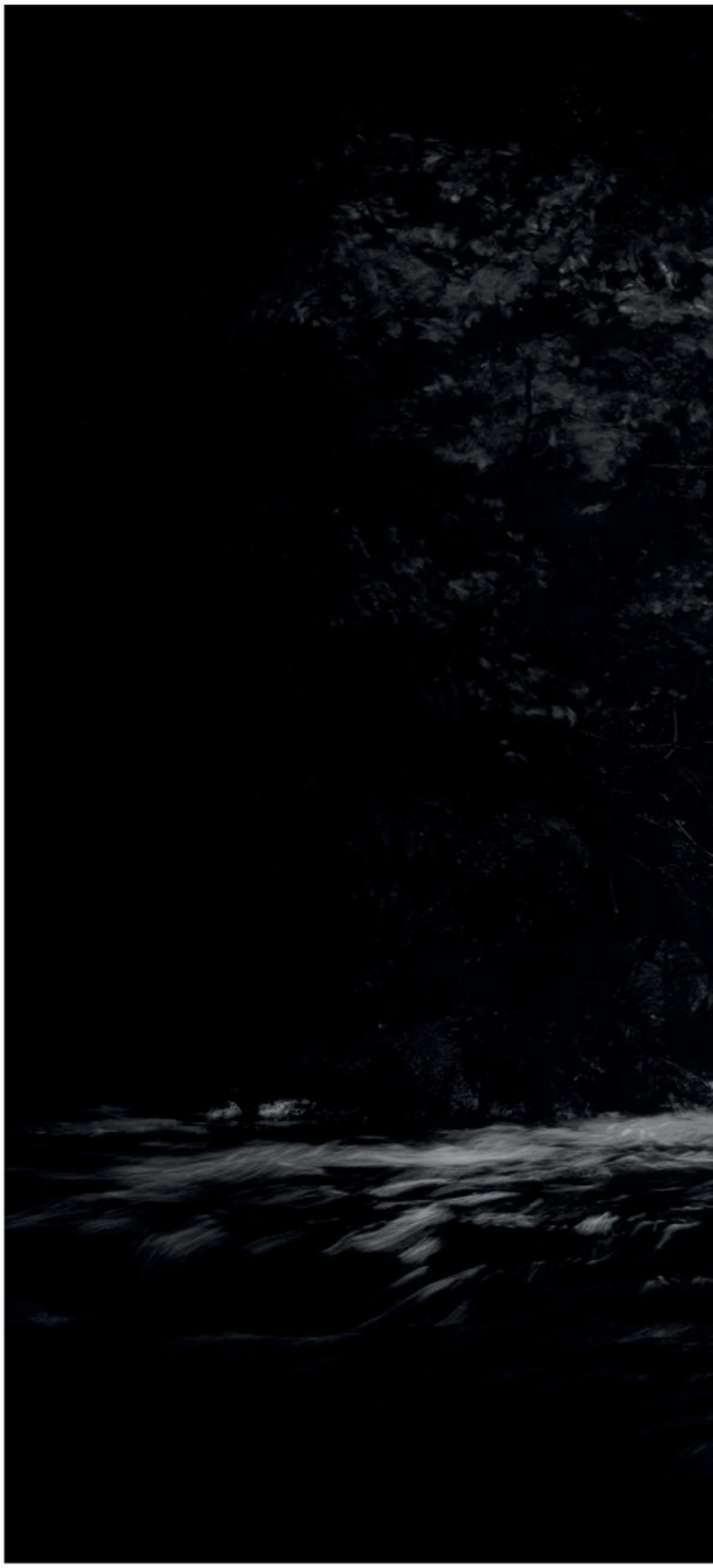
With the cloud cover shrouding the sun, the light was diffused, but the high wind meant the leaves and branches are blurry with the slow shutter speed being used. Therefore, the colour image looks blurred and messy. A faster shutter speed would offset this; however, that mystical quality in the water would have been lost. I checked the image in a monochrome profile and the mystical nature of this image became even more apparent.

Postproduction was in Lr: for mono images my first step is always to move to a monochrome profile so that I do not inadvertently add back colour afterwards. Adjustments were made to exposure, highlights and shadows and a check of black and white points to utilise the full tonal range of the image.

Using a brush, there was some selective adjustments made to accentuate the mist and sunlight filtering through the trees and minor adjustments made to the temp slider. I was happy to have the image with a histogram more to the left (low key) with just enough detail to be seen in the far side of the river.

I enjoy both the story of taking this image and the results so much that the image has featured in a photobook on 'Monochrome Moments', it is a framed print on our wall at home and it will feature in a collaborative Photography Exhibition titled 'Near and Far' in early 2026 in Bendigo, Victoria with fellow APS member Colleen Mahoney.

CANON EOS 5D MARK III, EF16-35MM LENS @ 32MM. 0.4S @ F14, ISO 100.

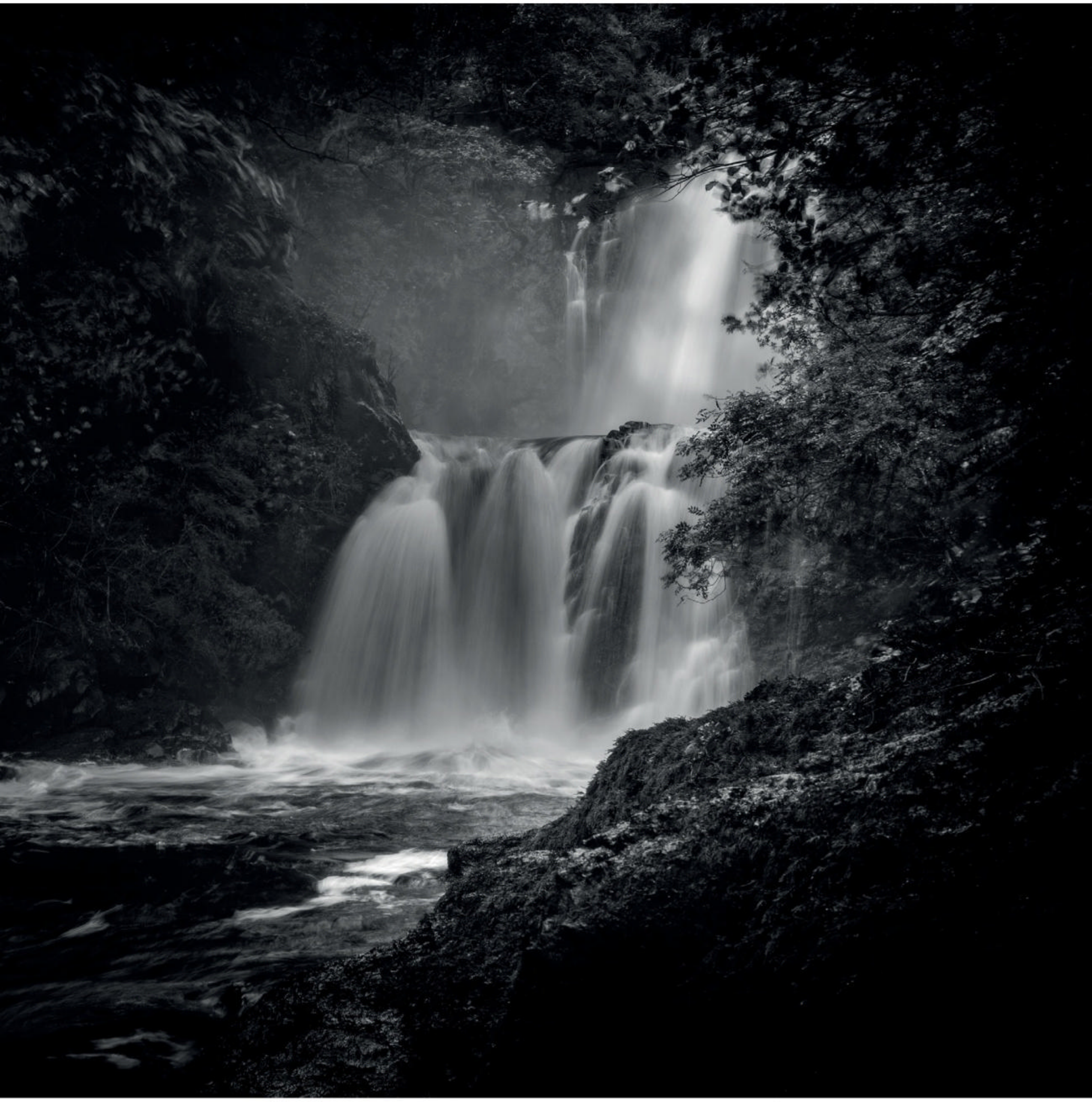


THE AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Membership with the Australian Photographic Society caters for enthusiasts, amateurs and professionals in photography.

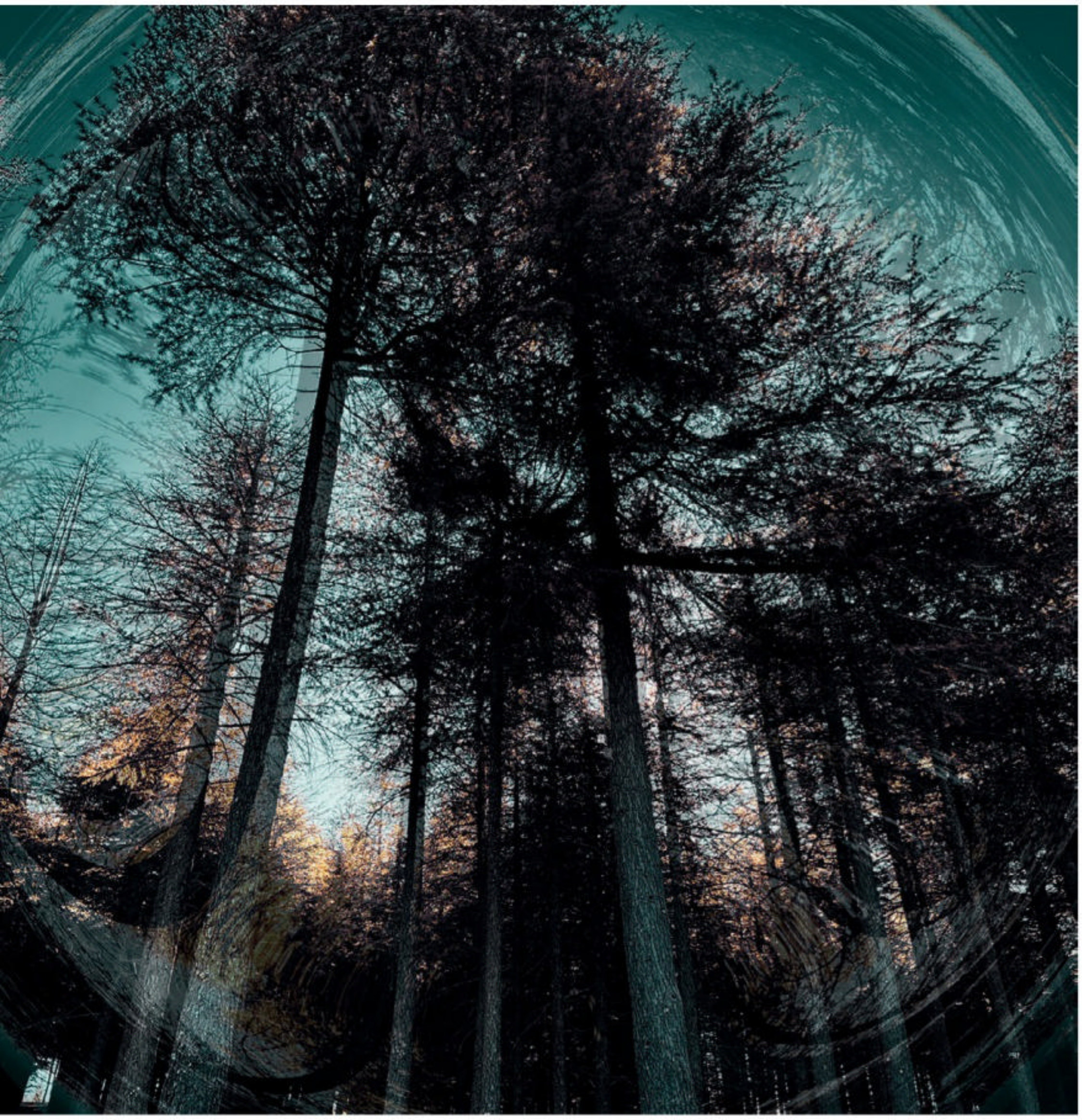
The APS can help you improve your photography, increase your level of satisfaction and achievement with your images, and make lasting friendships with other photographers throughout Australia. All that is required is that you take two steps; the first, joining the society; the second, becoming involved in what it has to offer.

Find out more at a-p-s.org.au



DIVERSIFYING OUR IMAGERY

Photography means different things to different people. For me, it has become an evolving journey of experimentation, discovery, and finding new ways to turn images into artworks.



Handmade 10 by Brian Rope.

WITH BRIAN ROPE

For some, it's a love of nature that draws them to the camera. Others are captivated by vivid colours, or by the simplicity of monochrome.

I'm fascinated by how Kay Mack, the first female President of the APS, continued photographing even after moving into a care facility late in life. Limited as her circumstances were, she still found subjects inside and outside the building, as well as among the people who lived there. Restrictions became opportunities.

Looking back over the images we've created on our photographic journeys often reveals patterns: perhaps we've always been drawn to the same subjects, or perhaps our interests and styles have shifted over time. I'm very much in the latter group. When asked what I like to photograph, my answer is usually, "everything that moves, and everything that doesn't!"

In recent years, I've been increasingly drawn to new ways of making images. I like to think of myself as an artist — not in a lofty sense, but simply as someone aiming to create varied and intentional photoartworks. One photographer I admire, Hilary Wardhaugh, works in this way. Her art regularly engages with major world issues; her most recent projects respond to the struggles of the people of Palestine.

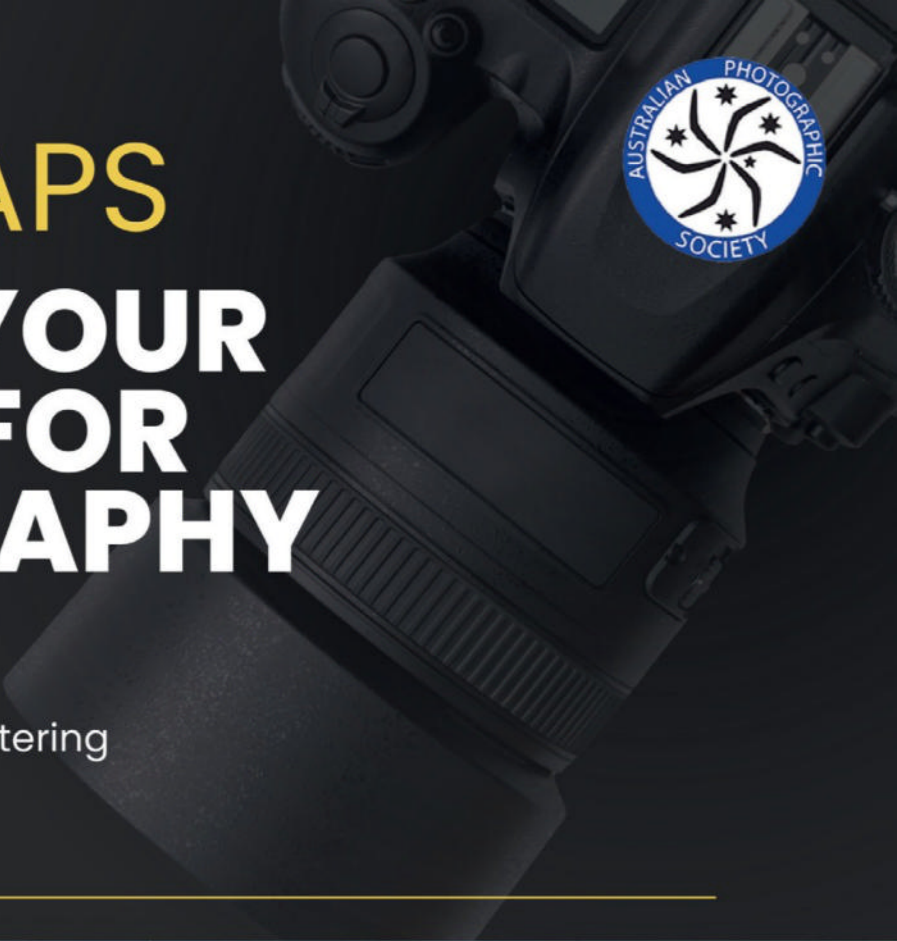
For my part, I've been experimenting with images of trees, often without using a conventional camera at all. Instead, I've played with phone apps that simulate lenses and films, with an old printer whose colours become wonderfully unpredictable when fed the wrong inks, and with a scanner that distorts those colours further.

By combining these unpredictable tools with digital editing, from simple tweaks of colour, contrast, and tone to the use of filters in different software, I've created artworks that feel unique. Wanting a tangible outcome, I printed 11 of my tree images and, for the first time, hand-made a small photobook.

For me, this spirit of experimentation keeps photography alive and exciting. It pushes me to keep my practice fresh, diverse, and full of discovery. ✪

Join the APS

INDULGE YOUR PASSION FOR PHOTOGRAPHY



A not for profit organisation catering to enthusiasts, amateurs and professionals in photography.

Walkway to the Storm by Felicty Johnson
APS Silver Medal - APS National 2025

HONOURS & DISTINCTIONS

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Share your passion for taking pictures. APS members can share their images by participating in online folios, using the Critique Room for positive feedback on your images in addition to entering APS endorsed National and International exhibitions.

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IMAGE DOCTOR

Images need a pick-me-up?
The doctor will see you now.

BY ANTHONY MCKEE

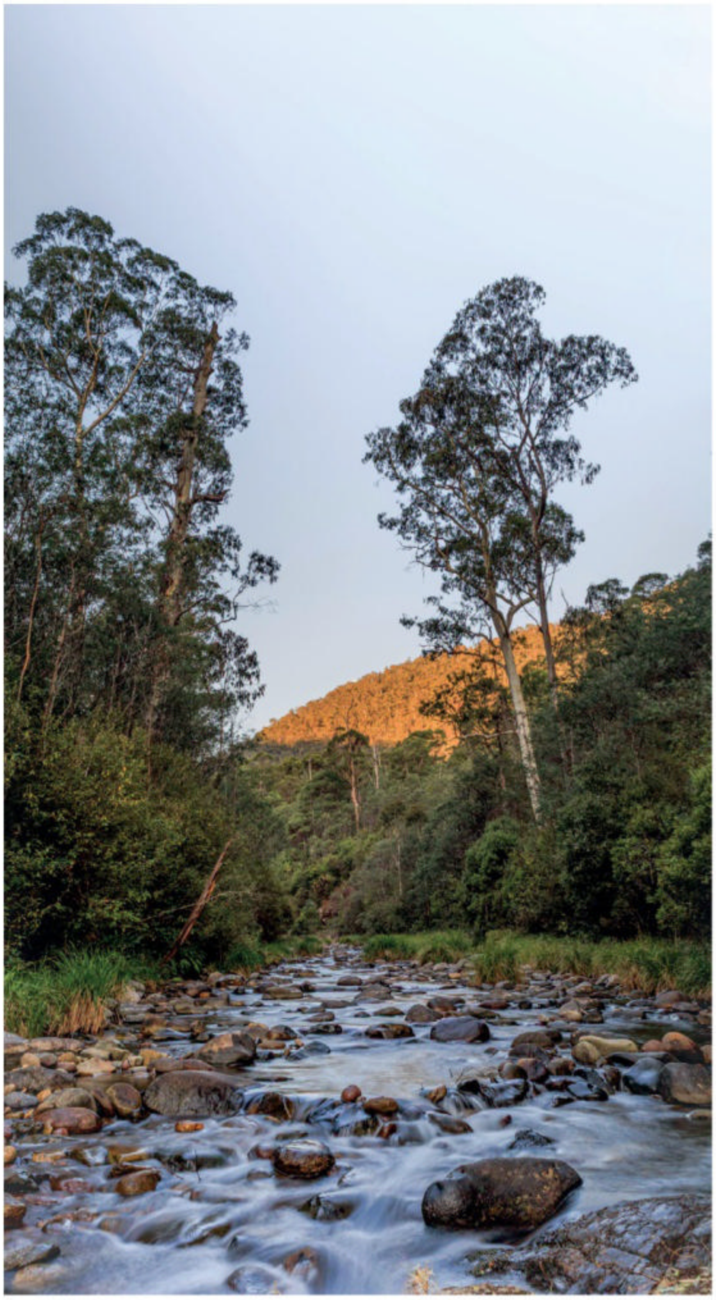
A TICK FOR TECHNIQUE

"I took this photo of a Western Spinebill after waiting a while for him to come back to this bush. It's not the sharpest photo but I'm pretty happy with it and just want some basic feedback on this image."

ANTHONY'S TIP: Hi William, I like this image and while you might not think it is sharp enough (possibly because the exceptionally fast movement in the bird's wing has created some blur) you have still applied appropriate technique. The one thing that I think would make the photo more interesting though, would be if you were to have shot in the horizontal as opposed to the vertical; I can't help feeling that the left of the frame is a little too close to the bird's tail.

The other adjustment that might make this image just a little more interesting would be to select the background (hopefully using the original RAW file) and to pull it back about half a stop, just to get a bit more tone into the picture. Otherwise, good effort.

TITLE: Western Spinebill
PHOTOGRAPHER: William Haddrill
DETAILS: Canon R7, 100-400mm lens @ 400mm. 1/800s @ f8, ISO 1600.



WHERE DO YOUR EYES GO?

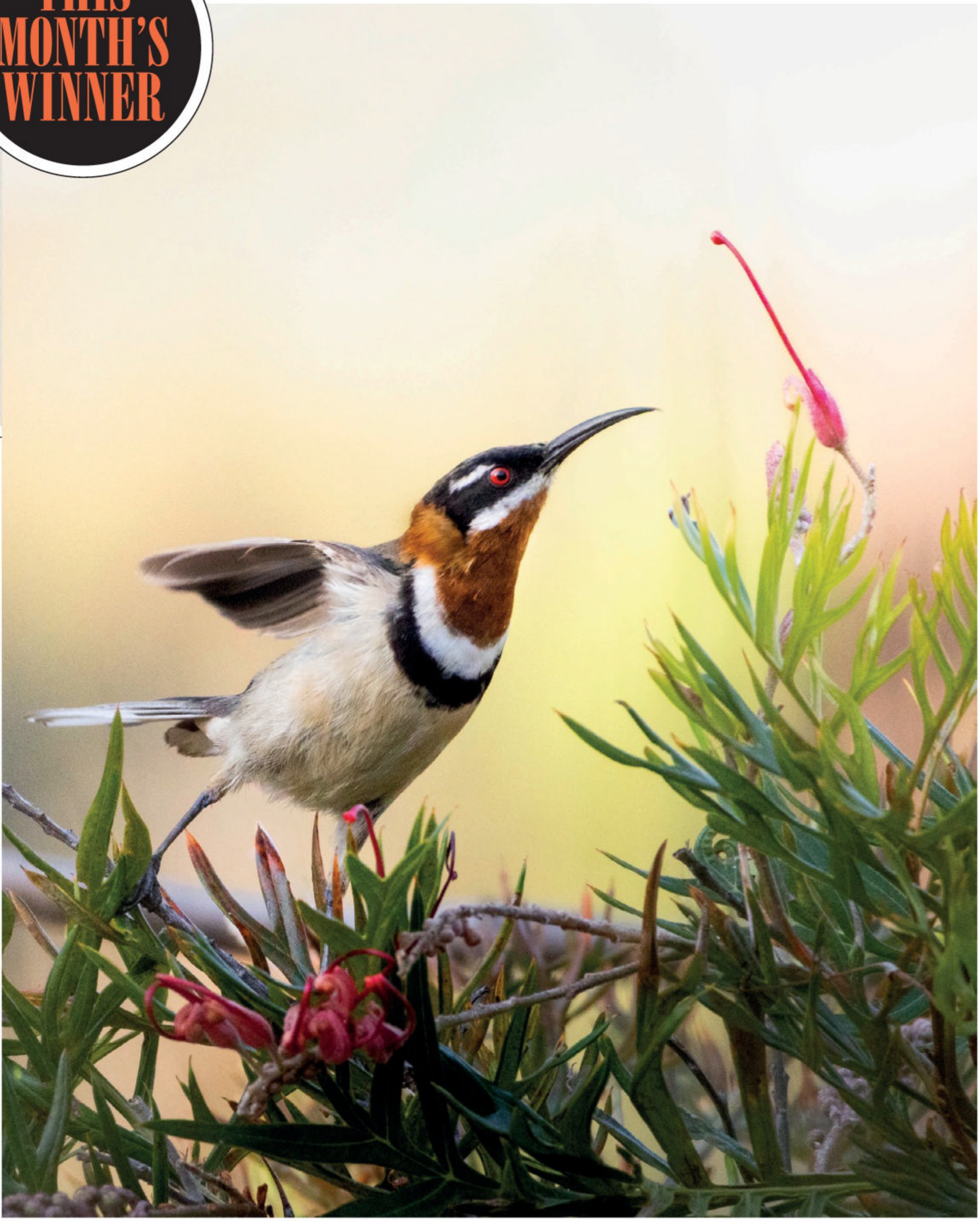
"I recently went hiking in Alpine National Park for two nights and found this river on the second night. I instantly created the composition in my mind and knew that golden hour would light the scene in an unparalleled way. This is a HDR image and I removed some small branches on the left hand side of the image. No AI was used in any parts of this photograph."

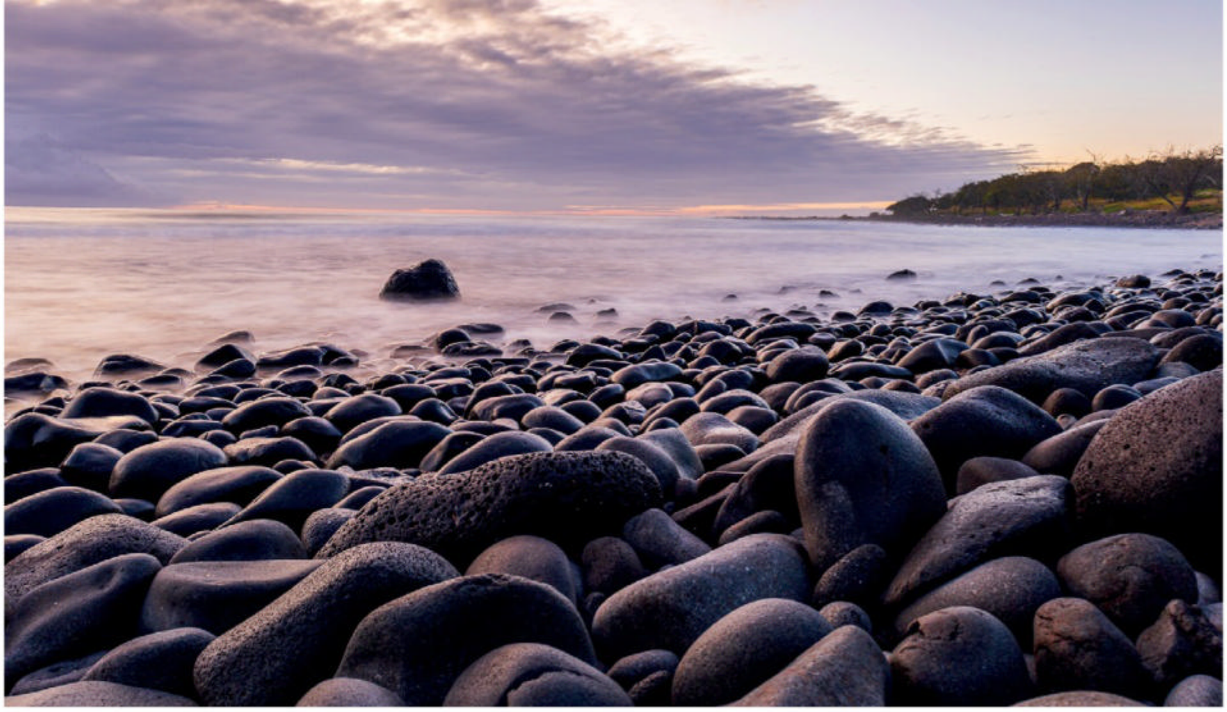
ANTHONY'S TIP: Hi Niam, learning how our eyes interrogate a scene can make all the difference to how we process our images. This photo is a classic example – look at it and ask yourself, where are your eyes going? Our eyes should be enjoying all that rich detail in the foreground but instead our eyes keep wandering up to the sky, simply because by default our eyes are always drawn to the brightest part of the scene.

To get about this problem most landscape photographers will typically darken their skies. One way of doing this has been to use a Graduated Filter, but more often than not most photographers will now darken the sky in post. Typically, I expose for the sky and then (having shot RAW) I will use an adjustment brush to brighten the foreground. Keep up the good work.

TITLE: The Flow
PHOTOGRAPHER: Niam Yagnik
DETAILS: Canon M50 Mark II, 15-45mm lens @ 15mm. 2s @ f9, ISO 160.

THIS MONTH'S WINNER



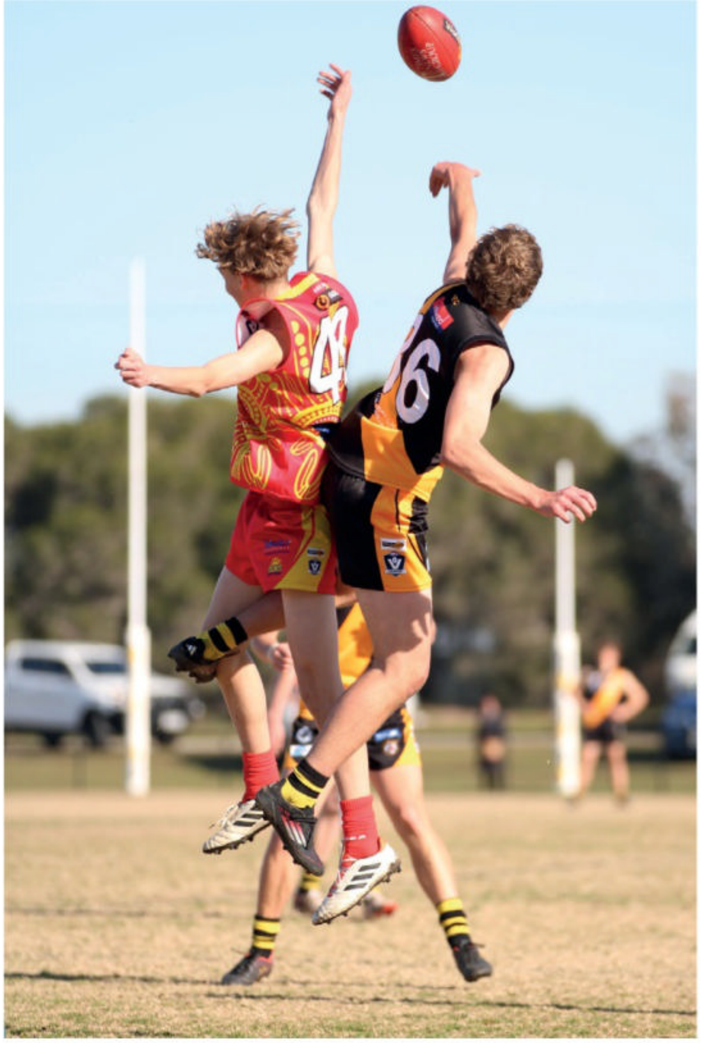


MAKE A HERO OF YOUR SUBJECT

"I captured this image in Burnett Heads at a local spot. It was captured using my Canon EOS RP on a small tripod. Any feedback on how I could do better would be appreciated."

ANTHONY'S TIP: Hey Joseph, one question every photographer should ask of their subject is, what is your message to me? As I look at this mass of boulders on a shoreline, I see boldness and courage. Each of these rocks probably started life as a jagged strata over a million years ago, and over time they have been bashed and polished into the uniform shape we see now, much like soldiers in an army. For me, this photo needs to turn those boulders into heroes, and one of the best ways to do this is to crop this image to a vertical and make more of the foreground. My quiet hope is that you did also make a photo of this scene in the vertical, and somehow I think if you have a look at it you will realise that this is your winning image.

TITLE: Burnett Heads Sunrise
PHOTOGRAPHER: Joseph McCormack
DETAILS: Canon EOS RP, 24-105mm f4-7.1 lens @ 24mm. 8s @ f16, ISO 100.



REACH HIGHER

"This image was shot at a local Under 18's footy match. I was impressed by the athleticism of the two players contesting the ruck and wanted to try and capture the action from a low (kneeling) perspective to emphasise their height in the contest."

ANTHONY'S TIP: Hi Wayne, one of the challenges of sports photography is knowing where to be at the right time. I mean, how much better would this photo be had you been on the direct opposite side of this play as both these guys were going for the ball?

What I think you can do to make this photo more interesting though is to re-crop the image upwards. You will notice there is plenty of ground beneath the players' feet, and not much sky above the ball. Open the image in Photoshop, go to the crop tool and just move the crop upwards so there is less ground beneath the players' feet, then you could use generative AI to put more sky in above the ball. While we still might not be seeing the players' faces we will at least have given those players a chance to reach up into the air and catch the ball!

TITLE: Young Guns Fly
PHOTOGRAPHER: Wayne Peters
DETAILS: EOS 7D, 70-200 f2.8 lens @ 185mm. 1/1000s @ f2.8, ISO 100.

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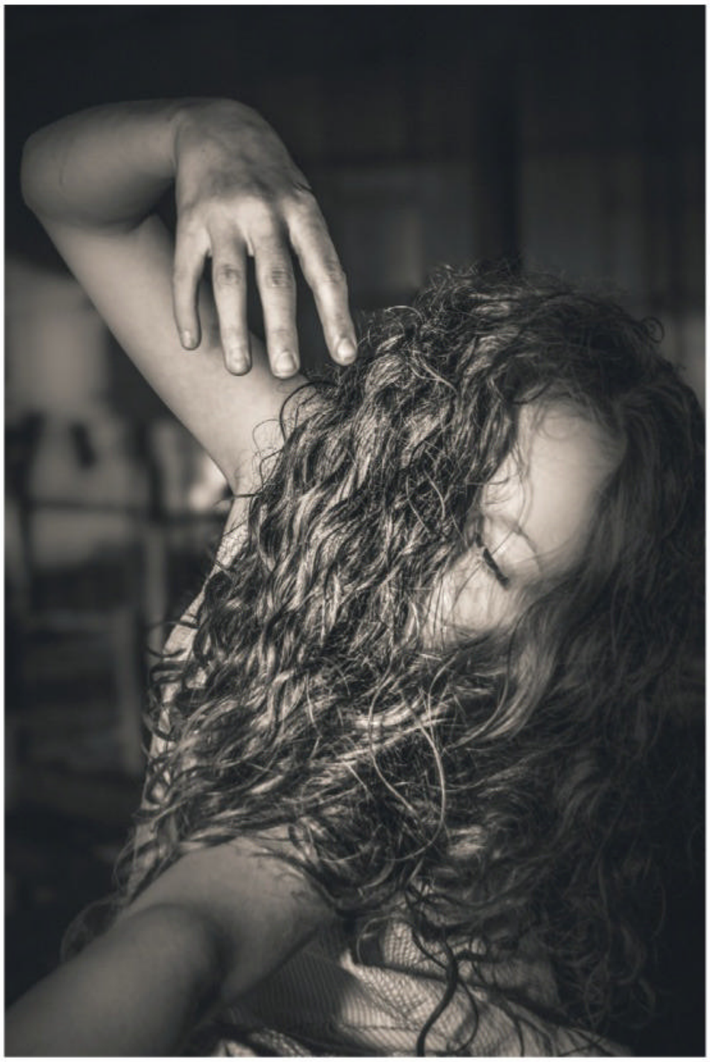

EXPLORING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

"I am an amateur photographer and have been photographing for one year and have completed my studies in Photography. I made this photo in an old abandoned sheep shearing shed. My subject was playing around with ballet poses while I was using the background as a texture. I was able to snap this image as her hair was falling over her face, but I don't know how I feel about it."

ANTHONY'S TIP: Hi Caroline, a collaboration of talent can be a wonderful way of exploring new ideas, but while you might occasionally fluke a great shot, most of the time you will have to work the situation. Yes, you took a model to an old woolshed, but what are we seeing of this model or even the woolshed? A hand and a mop of hair?

Not every image needs to be a literal interpretation of the scene, but good abstract images still need some level of narrative to be interesting. I would be going back to this location with your model, but this time shoot a little wider, or try placing the model against a wall to bring textures together, or try combining her movement with slow shutter speeds. Keep exploring the options.

TITLE: Caroline Stargatt
PHOTOGRAPHER: Curly Girl
DETAILS: Canon 800D, Canon 18-200mm lens @ 40mm. 1/60s @ f5.6, ISO 400.

WIN!

12 MONTH SUBSCRIPTION TO AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHY OR CAPTURE MAGAZINE

Congratulations to William Haddrill who has won a 12-month subscription to either *Australian Photography* or *Capture* magazine for taking out Image Doctor this month! *AP* has been celebrating the work of Australian photographers for more than 70 years. Published quarterly, *Capture* is Australia's leading journal for emerging and professional photographers.

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- Email entries to: imagedoctor@australianphotography.com with "Image Doctor" in the subject line.
- Include your name, image title and up to 150 words about how you created it.
- Only one image per person per month.
- Images must be saved in JPEG format. Maximum file size is 5MB. Include your name in the filename of the image.
- An Australian address is required in order to receive the prize.
- Employees of Yaffa Publishing or the sponsor are not eligible to win the prize.
- The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

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“We make memorable journeys, you capture incredible images”.

Congratulations, Fran Gass!
During our Lake Tyrrell Workshop in July 2025, we celebrate a significant milestone: Fran’s **64th adventure** with World Photo Adventures! Over the past 18 years, she has enriched our journeys with breathtaking images, new friendships, and unforgettable memories. Fran stands out among our many wvesteemed travellers who have completed double digit adventures with us.

At World Photo Adventures, we remain committed to delivering exceptional experiences and unparalleled photography opportunities. Our guiding principle, “Your photography comes first”, has been the foundation of our success for decades. Join us and embrace the adventure of a lifetime!

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